AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY
United States of America

*Muslims who believe in the Messiah
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian*

An informational, literary, educational, and training magazine of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA

اَللّٰهُ وَلِیُّ الَّذِیۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا ۙ یُخۡرِجُهُمۡ مِّنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ اِلَی النُّوۡرِ ؕ

القران الحکیم ۲:۲۵۸

The Ahmadiyya GAZETTE USA

September-October 2017

Scenes from 2017 National Jalsa Salana, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA

Our Late Br Lutf-ur-Rahman Mahmud with Hadrat Khalifatul-Masih IV, Rahimahullah.

Waqar-i-Amal Bo Mosque

Prayers at construction site

In TI High School

With President Stevens of Sierra Leone

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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Acronyms for salutations used in this publication

sa/s:	Ṣallallāhu 'Alaihi Wa Sallam (may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him)
as/a:	'Alaihis-Salām (may peace be upon him)
ra:	Raḍiyallāhu 'Anhu/'Anha (may Allāh be pleased with him/her)
rh:	Raḥimahullāhu Ta'ālā (may Allāh shower His mercy on him)
aba:	Ayyadahullāhu Ta'ālā Bi-Naṣrihil-'Azīz (may Allāh support him with His mighty help)

Verse numbers in the references from the Holy Qur'ān count Tasmiya at the beginning of a chapter as the first verse.

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Table of Contents

ACCEPTANCE OF PRAYERS **2**

GAINING FAVORS OF ALLAH **3**

GOD IS THE SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE **4**

WEEKLY GUIDANCE FROM ḤAḌRAT KHALĪFATUL-MASĪḤ V **5**

ACTIVITIES AND NEWS OF AHMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN USA **19**

RESPECTED MIAN LUTFUR RAHMAN MAHMOOD PASSES AWAY **21**

***QAḌĀ* ORIENTATION SEMINAR** **22**

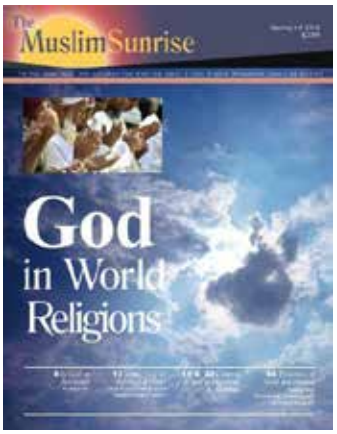
INTERNATIONAL NEWS **23**

DISCOVERY OF A LETTER OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH TO AN AMERICAN COLONEL IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE **27**

ḤAJJ **32**

INTERVIEW WITH BR ABDUL-KARIM **44**

DIABETES – PART 2 ..... **52**



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Guidance from the Holy Qur'an

In the words of the Promised Messiah, may peace be upon him

Acceptance of Prayers

وَاِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِیْ عَنِّیْ فَاِنِّیْ قَرِیْبٌ۔ اُجِیْبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ اِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْیَسْتَجِیْبُوْا لِیْ وَلْیُؤْمِنُوْا بِیْ لَعَلَّهُمْ یَرْشُدُوْنَ

And when My servants ask thee about Me, say: 'I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me. So, they should hearken to Me and believe in Me, that they may follow the right way.' (2[Al-Baqarah]:187)

The prophecy of the advent of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) by the Holy Prophet Mohammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has been fulfilled in the person of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qādiān, India. He received the divine call from Allah and then claimed to be the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him). He announced to the whole world that our God is a living God, our religion Islam is a living religion and our Holy Prophet Mohammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is a living prophet. He also announced that God Almighty speaks to him and accepts his prayers as promised by Him in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 187, of the Holy Quran (mentioned above). He rejuvenated the comprehensive message of Islam, furnished guidance to mankind by writing more than 80 books, and conveyed the true message of Islam to all nations by giving lectures. He established an Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at in 1889 so that the believers may worship one living God, serve mankind, convey the true message of Islam to all, and live a peace-loving pious life to please God.

The Promised Messiah, may peace be upon him, explained the acceptance of prayers to a famous Muslim scholar, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, in his book Barakat-ud-Du'a as follows.

"If someone is in doubt because some prayers are not accepted and are apparently ineffectual, I would say that the same is also true of medicines. Have medicines closed the door of death, or is it impossible for them to fail in their purpose? And yet can anyone deny their effect? It is true that predestination comprehends everything, but it has neither rendered the sciences useless nor has it shown the means to be unreliable. If you reflect deeply enough, you will see that the physical and spiritual means are not outside the sphere of predestination. For instance, if a sick person's destiny is favorable, all the means for the proper remedy become available and his physical condition happens to be such that it is ready to derive full benefit from the remedy, and the medicine also finds its mark accurately. The same principle applies to prayer. All the means and conditions for the acceptance of a prayer only become available when God wills to accept it. God Almighty has bound both the physical and spiritual orders in the same chain of cause and effect. Thus, it is a gross mistake on the part of Sayyid Sahib to accept the physical order and to deny the spiritual one.

I deem it necessary to add that if Sayyid Sahib does not repent of his erroneous assumptions and insists on being given proof of the acceptance of prayers, then let him know that I have been commissioned to dispel such misconceptions and I promise to inform him of the acceptance of some of my prayers beforehand, and I will even go so far as to publish them. But Sayyid Sahib too should affirm that he will give up his false ideas when it has been proved that I am true in my claim.

Sayyid Sahib asks, why is it that all prayers are not accepted when, according to him, God Almighty in the Holy Quran has promised the acceptance of all prayers? Sayyid Sahib is in fact grossly mistaken in this regard. The verse "pray unto Me; I will answer your prayer," (40[Al-Mu'min]:61) cannot help his purpose, because here the prayer which man has been ordered to observe is not the ordinary supplication, rather it refers to worship which has been made obligatory on man. The imperative mood here signifies an obligation, while it is obvious that all prayers are not obligatory, since in some instances Allah has praised those who practice patience and forbearance and commit themselves entirely to Him. The main argument in this regard is that God does not only make this prayer obligatory but, pronouncing it as 'worship,' warns of the punishment of hell in case of disobedience. It is obvious that such a warning does not accompany the other forms of prayer. Sometimes even Prophets (peace be upon them) have been admonished for praying. The following verse, for example, testifies to this: "I advise thee lest thou become one of the ignorant" (11[Hud]: 47). It is obvious that if every prayer was worship, then why should Noah (peace be upon him) have been reprimanded with the words "Ask not of Me!". There are times when saints and Prophets consider it disrespectful to pray for a certain thing. At such times, the sages have acted upon the dictates of their hearts.; which means that when they were confronted with a trial they would pray if their heart's dictate was to pray, but if it called for endurance they would endure and refrain from prayer. .... Besides, God Almighty has never promised to accept all prayers, but has said clearly that He will accept or reject prayers as He desires.

The following verse clearly states this point: “Nay, but on Him alone will you call; then will He remove that which you call on Him to remove, if He please” (6[Al-An‘ām]: 42). Even if we condescend to accept that in this context the word ‘pray’ refers to prayer in general, and we will have to affirm that the prayer ref erred to here is that which complies with all the necessary conditions; and we know that it is not in the power of man to meet all these conditions by himself unless he is helped by God. One should also remember that humility and anguish alone is not enough for prayer to be accepted, for it also requires righteousness, purity, truthfulness, perfect certainty, perfect love, and perfect attention. (Barakāt-ud-Du‘ā)

Guidance from the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him

Gaining Favors of Allah

عن عائشة رضي الله عنهاأَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ يَقُوْمُ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ حَتّٰى تَتَفَطَّرَ قَدَمَاهُ، فَقُلْتُ لَهٗ: لِمَ تَصْنَعُ هٰذَا يَا رَسُوْلَ اللهِ، وَقَدْ غَفَرَ اللهُ لَكَ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ ؟ قالَ: "أَفَلَااُحِبُّ اَنْ اَكُوْنَ عَبْدًا شَكُوْرًا".

1. ‘Ā’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrates that the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to offer prayer at night for such a long time that his feet would get swollen. Once I asked him, "O Prophet of Allah, why do you take so much trouble while God Almighty has forgiven all your past shortcomings and faults.” (In other words, God Almighty has taken the responsibility to keep you safe from all faults and weaknesses.) The Prophet replied, "Would I then not wish to become a grateful servant (for my Lord's blessing and mercy). (Bukhari)

عَنْ رَبِيْعَةَ بْنِ كَعْبِ نِ الْاَسْلَمِيِّ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ خَادِمِ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَمِنْ اَهْلِ الصُّفَّةِ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ قَالَ: كُنْتُ اَبِيْتُ مَعَ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَاَتَيْتُهٗ بِوَضُوْئِهٖ وَحَاجَتِهٖ فَقَالَ:سَلْنِيْ فَقُلْتُ: اَسْأَلُکَ مُرَافَقَتِکَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ فَقَالَ: اَوْغَيْرَ ذٰلِکَ ؟ قُلْتُ هُوَ ذٰکَ قَالَ: اَاَعِنِّيْ عَلٰى نَفْسِکَ بِكَثْرَةِ السُّجُوْدِ۔

2. Rabī‘ah (may Allah be pleased with him) who was the servant of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and belonged to the people of As-Suffah (the raised platform outside the house of the Holy Prophet) narrates that he used to sleep at the Holy Prophet’s house to serve him. When the Holy Prophet woke up at night, he brought water for his ablution and other needs. One day, the Holy Prophet told him if he would demand anything from him and to say so. He replied, “I request you to offer such prayer for me that I may be with you in the paradise as well.” The Holy Prophet said, "In addition to this, do you want something else.” He replied, “This is enough.” At this the Holy Prophet said, “I shall pray but I also need your help with increased prostration and prayer for this purpose.” (Muslim)

عَنْ اَنَسٍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، فِيْمَا يَرْوِيْهِ عَنْ رَبِّهٖ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ قَالَ: اِذَا تَقَرَّبَ الْعَبْدُ اِلَيَّ شِبْرًا تَقَرَّبْتُ اِلَيْهِ ذِرَاعًا، وَاِذَا تَقَرَّبَ اِلَيَّ ذِرَاعًا تَقَرَّبْتُ مِنْهُ بَاعًا، وَاِذَا اَتَانِيْ يَمْشِيْ اَتَيْتُهٗ هَرْوَلَةً۔

3. Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated this [blessed] saying from his God that God Almighty says, “When my servant gets close to me by the length of a hand then I get close to him by the length of one's arm. When he gets close to me by the length of one’s arm, then I get close to him by the length of outstretched arms. And when he starts walking towards me, then I start running towards him.” (Muslim)

Guidance from the Promised Messiah, May peace be upon him

God is the Source of Knowledge

It is of course true that one cannot attain true knowledge until God grants it, and it cannot benefit anyone except through God's grace. This knowledge then opens the door of seeking and recognizing the truth. It is only through repeated acts of Divine grace that this door remains open and is not shut thereafter. Spiritual knowledge, in short, can only be attained through Divine grace, and through it alone can it survive. Divine grace purifies and illuminates knowledge, removes the intervening veils and cleanses the Nafs-e-'Ammarah (the soul prone to enjoin evil) of all its impurities.

It bestows strength and life upon the soul and releases the baser self from the prison of sin and purges it of its evil passions. Also, this grace salvages one from the flood of carnal passions and a kind of transformation takes place in man and he develops a natural aversion for sin. Thereafter, the very first urge felt by the soul, through God's grace, is called Du'ā [supplication]. Do not think that we already pray every day, and that the Salāt we offer is also prayer; for the prayer which follows true knowledge and is born of Divine grace is of an altogether different color and complexion. Such prayer is a thing that consumes, it is a fire that melts, it is a magnetic force that draws Divine mercy, it is a death but ultimately gives life, it is a raging flood but finally turns into a boat. Through it every wrong is redressed and every poison finally becomes an antidote.

Blessed are the prisoners who never tire of supplication, for they shall one day be freed. Blessed are the blind who are not listless in their prayers, for they shall one day see. Blessed are those lying-in graves who supplicate to God for help and succor, for one day they shall be taken out of their graves. Blessed are you who never tire of supplication, your soul melts in prayer, your eyes shed tears, and a fire kindles in your breast which takes you to dark closets and wildernesses so that you may taste solitude and drives you to restlessness and near madness, for you shall finally receive Divine bounties. The God to Whom I invite is very Gracious, Merciful, Modest, True, and Faithful. He bestows His mercy on the humble ones. You too should be faithful and pray with all sincerity and faith so that He may bestow His mercy on you. Dissociate yourselves from the commotion of the world and do not give religious complexion to your egoistic disputes. Accept defeat for the sake of God so that you may become heirs to great victories. God will show miracles to those who supplicate, and those who ask will be blessed with extraordinary grace. Prayer comes from God and to Him it returns. Through prayer, God becomes as close to you as your very life. The first blessing of prayer is that it brings about a holy change in a person, as a consequence of which God also brings about a transformation in His attributes.

His attributes are indeed immutable, but for such a transformed person He shows a different manifestation of which the world knows nothing. It would seem as if He had become another God, whereas, in fact, there is no other God. The truth is that it is a new manifestation of His which portrays Him in an altogether different light. It is then that God, in honor of this special manifestation, does for the transformed one what He does not do for others. These are what are known as miracles. In short, prayer is the elixir which turns a handful of dust into pure gold. It is water that washes away inner impurities. With such prayer the spirit melts and flows like water to fall prostrate on the threshold of the Holy One. It stands in the presence of God, bows down and prostrates before Him. The Salāt taught by Islam is only its reflection. (Lecture Sialkot in Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 20, pp. 222-224)

Please find the original Urdu text for above pages in Urdu section)

Is not Allah sufficient for His servant?
39 [Az-Zumar] : 37

Weekly Guidance from Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V

May Allāh be his Helper

Friday Sermon 26 May 2017 at Baitul-Futūh Mosque, London

The promise of Khilāfat is linked to faith and good deeds.

Aḥmadīs in Algeria have remained steadfast in the face of coercion.

After reciting verse 56 of Sūrah Al-Nur, which is translated as follows: "Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security and peace after their fear: They will worship Me, and they will not associate anything with Me. Then whoso is ungrateful after that, they will be the rebellious" (24:56), Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: This verse promises the believers that Khilāfat shall always remain among them, although, in the light of a hadith of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) , it will be lost for some time on account of people's misdeeds, but once again Khilāfat on the footsteps of Prophethood shall be established. Because of the literal and misleading interpretation of the religious scholars, most people do not understand how this Khilāfat will be established. Speaking of such ignorant divines, the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: Some ignorant people deny the generality of the verse promising Khilāfat to the believers and say that it only applies to the Companions of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) after whom Khilāfat had ended and there shall remain nothing of it till doomsday. It was confined to a mere 30-year period. Can any righteous person hold the belief that while the blessings of the Prophet Moses (may peace be upon him) lasted for 1400 years, the blessing of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who came for all times to come were confined to his own age, and that his blessings should not be manifested through his spiritual successors? Alas, they too call themselves Muslims who utter such things. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) again says that if Khilāfat was only meant to last for 30 years, then God could have given the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) another 30 years to live instead.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: There are people today who wish to establish Khilāfat on the basis of material means. They do not understand the message of the verse that faith and good deeds are a precondition to Khilāfat. It was on the basis of such flawed thinking that enemies of Islām started aiding groups who organized themselves in the name of Khilāfat. And these groups are now growing weak on account of not getting material help. How could they have strengthened Islām when all they were doing were following the agenda of the enemies of Islām. These include leaders who want to hold on to power.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: A kind-hearted person is deeply perturbed to observe that Muslims themselves are involved in the killing of innocent people and in spreading destruction. A few days ago, innocent people were unjustifiably killed in Manchester. Such actions can in no way be attributed to Islām. May Allāh have mercy on the deceased and grant solace to the bereaved families. And may Allāh bring these people to their senses who are perpetrating such acts in the name of Islām.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: The killing and destruction going on in the Muslim world is a result of disobeying God's commandments. Aḥmadīs, who have witnessed fear being turned to peace by holding on to Khilāfat, are the ones who feel the most pain at the condition of the Muslims.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Khilāfat cannot be established either through worldly power or through resolutions. The Khilāfat which turn fear into peace and strengthens the faith can only come about by following the path told by the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), as Allāh says in Sūrah Jumu'ah: "And among others from among them who have not yet joined them." (62:04)

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Can following in the footsteps of today's scholars and kings bring the blessings that were bestowed on the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his Companions? These blessings can only be achieved by following the person who came to bring faith back to the world. Today no one else is doing this other than the institution of Khilāfat started by the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him), the foremost lover of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). This is the mission of

this Jamāʿat this age of infidelity and disbelief and this is the work we are doing. In order to strengthen Islām and establish faith, it is essential to be linked to the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says:

At the time when people had gone astray, God sent the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and illuminated their hearts with the light of Divine cognition. And then another people shall appear in the latter ages whom God would cause to become like the Companions of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and fill their hearts with the same faith and conviction. Hence, there are many today who having derived light from the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) and having witnessed signs have entered Jamāʿat Aḥmadiyya and do not care for the suffering they have to undergo at the hands of the opponents. For example, Aḥmadīs in Algeria are growing ever stronger in their faith. They write that they are thankful to God for having blessed them with the true faith and gathered them at the hand of the Khalīfa. Their period of tribulation has increased them in fraternity and brought them closer to Khilāfat. We witnessed many signs from God that increased our faith and conviction. Allāh's blessings are descending on the oppressed Aḥmadīs of Algeria and some of them have been released. They write about some comforting dreams they had during their confinement and that the Khalīfa's prayers were a source of solace for them and that their release was a result of the Khalīfa's prayers. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said that both men and women have and are continuing to make sacrifices in their own sphere. When the opponents tried to cause fear, Allāh would turn it into peace by the blessing of Khilāfat. Difficulties are bound to arise, but God, in keeping with His promise, grants peace and contentment.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Allāh tells the believers to worship Him as He ought to be worshipped. Fear will turn into peace on account of one's relationship with Allāh and with Khilāfat. Aḥmadīs in Algeria have not even seen the Khalīfa, but on account of their perfect faith Allāh is blessing them with peace and tranquility, just as He did for those who were close to the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him). All this is on account of the on-going institution of Khilāfat.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Allāh had given the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) the glad tiding that He would cause his mission to be successful. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) wrote in Al-Waṣiyyat: "So dear friends! since it is the Divine practice, from time immemorial, that God Almighty shows two Manifestations so that the two false joys of the opponents be put to an end, it is not possible now that God should relinquish His old Sunnah. So, do not grieve over what I have said to you; nor should your hearts be distressed, for it is essential for you to witness the second Manifestation also, and its Coming is better for you because it is everlasting and will not end till the Day of Judgment. God says, I shall make this Jamāʿat who are your followers, prevail over others till the Day of Judgment. Thus, it is inevitable that you see the day of my departure, so that after that day the day comes which is the day of ever-lasting promise. Our God is He Who keeps His promise and is Faithful and is the Truthful God. He shall show you all that He has promised. Though these days are the last days of this world, and there are many a disaster waiting to happen, yet it is necessary that this world continues to exist until all those things about which God has prophesied come to pass."

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: It was God's great favor on us that after the demise of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him), He sustained the Jamāʿat through Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I (may Allah be pleased with him). Then after his demise there was a tumultuous time where some people turned away, but Khilāfat emerged victorious. Great difficulties arose in the time of Khalīfatul-Masīḥ III (may Allah showers His mercy on him) and grave anti Aḥmadiyya schemes were hatched by the government during the time of Khalīfatul-Masīḥ IV (may Allah showers His mercy on him), but the Jamāʿat continued to progress and spread and the message of Islām started reaching millions. All this shows that Islām will emerge successful only through the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) and his Khulafā. Our opponents can never succeed no matter how hard they try. May Allāh enable us to be a part of the Promised Messiah's mission and to raise our standards of worship. Āmīn.

At the end of the sermon, Huzoor informed the Jamāʿat of the sad demise of Chaudhary Hameed Ahmad Sahib, son of Chaudhary Muhammad Suleiman Akhtar Sahib of UK and led his funeral prayer after the Friday prayer.

Upcoming Topics for Al-Hilal

My Most Memorable Jalsa... What I learned from the last Jalsa I attended

Deadline September 30. Send articles to al-hilal@ahmadiyya.us

Friday Sermon 2 June 2017 at Baitul-Futūh Mosque, London

Whoever observes fasts in the month of Ramaḍān with faith and introspection will be forgiven all his previous sins.

Our faith can never be enlightened without the recognition of God.

After reciting verse 184 of Sūrah Al-Baqarah, which is translated as follows: "O ye who believe! fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become righteous." (2:184)

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: By the grace of Allāh, we are fortunate to have another Ramaḍān in our lives. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says that if people knew about the excellence of Ramaḍān, they would wish that Ramaḍān lasted the whole year. He also says that whoever observes Fast in the month of Ramaḍān with faith and introspection will be forgiven all his previous sins. Every year the month of Ramaḍān has been ordained so that you adopt piety and do everything for the pleasure of God. When you observe your fasts with sincerity then you will come under God's refuge and will be saved from Satan. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says, Faith cannot be achieved without knowing God. Without the knowledge of God our faith can never be enlightened and radiant. We will recognize Him when our relations with Him are such as make us experience His mercy, grace and power. Man does not love the possessions of the next world as he does those of this world, and he does not believe in God's power and mercy and in His promises. This is something we need to do introspection about.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has laid down before us a guidance for our lives in two sentences. It is not enough just to say that we are observing the fast with faith, rather it has to be accompanied by introspection and self-analysis. This is the criterion that we need to live up to in order to strengthen our relationship with Allāh. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that faith in God is of two kinds. The first is the one that is confined to the tongue and has no impact upon our actions and deeds. The second is the one that is accompanied with practical testimony. Until one has the second kind of faith, I do not believe that a person really believes in God. I cannot understand how a person can believe in God and commit sins at the same time. Most people of the world claim to believe in Allāh, some call him Parmeshwar, others call him God, but when their claim is tested in terms of their practice, it is most often only a claim that is unsubstantiated by practical testimony. It is man's nature that when he truly believes in something, he seeks to avoid its dangers and to acquire its benefits. Why then, claiming to believe in God, does he not demonstrate the results of this claim? It has to be said that these are only words that have not been turned into faith. They deceive themselves in saying that they believe in God.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that man's first duty is to correct his faith in God, that is to say he should prove it through his actions and should not commit an action that is contrary to the greatness and commandment of God. This is the way to undertake self-inspection. Ramaḍān provides us a special atmosphere to submit before God and seek forgiveness for our past sins. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that man only continues to grow in faith as long as he continues to grow in piety.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: What people are doing in the world today in spite of observing Fast is all on account of lack of piety. They killed over a 100 people in Afghanistan, do they think they are going to be rewarded for this? They are deviating from God's commandment and from piety. It was truly in keeping with the purport of the Holy Qur'an that the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) said: Prayers that are not accompanied by piety are useless, indeed they are the keys to hell. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that piety and purity are the roots of faith, and faith cannot grow unless one grows in piety. When man analyses himself in this way, he is able to overcome his carnal passions and this brings him closer to Allāh. The true piety which cleanses and purifies man and for which Prophets are sent has disappeared from the world. Even angels bring greeting to a person who is pure and clean. People do not appreciate this, otherwise they would find all their pleasures through lawful means. When a thief steals, he is not a believer at that time; and when an adulterer commits adultery, he is not a believer at that time. If a lamb sees a lion before her, she cannot even eat grass, but people do not even have this much faith in God.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that our basic requirement and objective is piety, with this fundamental belief one can achieve everything. Without it, it is not possible for man to be saved from sins, whether great or small. The verses also point to piety and Taqwa.

As for those who say, 'Our Lord is Allāh,' and then

remain steadfast" also refers to Taqwa, it means that they were faced with severe trials and tribulations but they did not turn back from the pledge they had made. And those who show such fortitude, not only in Ramaḍān but throughout their lives, then angels come down for their help and say: Fear not, nor grieve, for God is your friend. And be happy with His paradise. Here paradise refers to the bliss of this world, as God says, "But for him who fears to stand before his Lord there are two Gardens" and "We are your friend and protector in this world and the next."

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Allāh blesses those who are steadfast and lead their lives according to His will. A true Muslim has to persevere. When man abides by Taqwa, Allāh opens all the doors for him. All the heights that Prophets attain are on account of perseverance. Empty Ṣalāt is of no use.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: In order to become righteous, one should not only shun evil but adopt virtues as well. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: In order for one to become righteous, it is necessary that after strictly abstaining from the obvious sins, such as adultery, theft, usurping the rights of others, displaying arrogance, contempt and miserliness, one should adopt and progress in the higher morals, and one should treat others with compassion, kindness and be sincere and truthful to God. And should search for ways to serve others which are worthy of admiration. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: The reason God has sent me is that the field of righteousness is empty and if you adopt Taqwa, all wisdom will be yours. Therefore, adopt righteousness.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: If Allah enables our Jamā'at to fight evil and adopt piety, then this is our greatest victory, and nothing can be more effective than this. If we look at other religions, piety is missing and worldly grandeur is their 'god'. But now God wants to make Himself known as the only true God. Those who worship material things cannot put their faith in God. Those who want to be saved by merely pledging the Bai'at are mistaken. You should adopt piety and righteousness to the extent that it removes God's wrath. Allāh has mercy on those who turn to Him. This Jamā'at was created for Taqwa. Let us make full use of this Ramaḍān and let us make these blessings a permanent part of our lives even after Ramaḍān.

At the end of the sermon, Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) informed the Jamā'at of the sad demise of Khwaja Ahmad Husain Sahib, a Dervish of Qādiān and led his funeral prayer in absentia after the Friday prayer.

Friday Sermon 9 June 2017 at Baitul Futūh Mosque, London

Truly courageous is the one who changes his moral character.

Spend all your power and energy in transforming your morals, for this is true valour.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: As I said in the last sermon, the objective of fasting is to inculcate *Taqwa* in our hearts. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that *Taqwa* should be evident from our morals; without *taqwa* we cannot perform any virtue. To be a *mutaqqi*, it is not only necessary to fulfill our obligations towards Allāh, but also to live up to the highest moral standards. We should impress others with our piety and virtue through our excellent morals. Good morals are the sign of a righteous person. Avoiding evil deeds is also *Taqwa*. If one possesses good moral character, even his enemies can become his friend. *Taqwa* has many facets, such as avoiding pride and egotism and shunning unlawful income. Even if the opponents hurl abuse at us, we should not respond in kind and should instead show patience. The result will be that they will admit your superiority and will be ashamed of what they have done.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: The basic principle is that we should practice good morals by aligning our actions to *taqwa*. Having good morals means seeking God's pleasure as we see embodied in the life of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It is necessary to mold our lives according to the example of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). These morals serve as a foundation, and if this foundation is wobbly then it cannot support the building. Good morals are like putting one brick over another; if one brick is not straight, the whole edifice will be defective.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that the most perfect example for us is that of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who was the repository of all the excellent qualities. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is like a giant tree under whose shade millions of people find shelter. His example is such that Allāh has commanded us to follow it according to our abilities. And for this we need to struggle and strive.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that unless man strives and resorts to prayer, the

veil that covers his heart cannot be removed. Allāh says that He does not avert the calamity that comes upon a people unless they themselves strive to alleviate it. There can be no transformation without effort and courage. Whether it is the people of our Jamā'at or anyone else, transformation can only come about through striving and prayer, not otherwise. Philosophers have varying views on this point; some believe that man can transform his morals through his efforts, while others insist that he cannot. The truth is that if one strives and does not become lax, one can transform one's moral character. The philosophers who think that it is impossible to change one's morals are mistaken. For instance, I know of some civil servants who used to receive bribes, but when they truly repented, they would not be swayed even by a mountain of gold. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that in the physical realm if one does not care for one's health, one soon succumbs to old age, and the same is true of the spiritual system. If someone does not strive to transform his baser morals with higher ones and does not do away with evil thoughts, then his moral condition will continue to deteriorate. In the month of Ramaḍān, Allāh has provided us an opportunity to overcome our laziness and to improve our moral condition.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that true repentance is very effective in attaining higher morals and perfection. Whoever wishes to rid himself of evil habits must repent with a true heart and a sincere determination. Repentance has three essential conditions: The first is to remove the evil thoughts that lead to evil conduct. The fact is that imagination has a major effect on man; therefore, we should do away with evil thoughts and imaginations. The second condition is to express remorse and to believe that the pleasures of this world are transient. The third condition is determination, which means to make a firm resolve never to revert to those evils ever again. And when he shows such remorse, Allāh will enable him to truly repent. Ultimately, the evil habits will disappear and the higher morals will take their place. But only God can grant one the power to undertake this, and it can be attained by living up to these three conditions. If one prays with steadfastness, God will enable him to undergo a transformation in his morals character.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that we do not need wrestlers in our Jamā'at; rather we need those who have the strength to transform their moral character. The true brave person is one who has the power to transform his moral condition. You should employ all your power and strength for this purpose, for this constitutes true valor and bravery. One's moral character is a miracle that no one can lay a finger on. This is why the Holy Prophet's moral character served as such a potent miracle. Thus, man should correct his moral condition, because this is the miracle that is never wasted and its benefit reaches far and wide. You will find in the stories of many people who were motivated to accept Islām upon witnessing moral miracles. The sinners who stood against the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not believe after seeing miracles, rather they were only convinced of his truth after witnessing his excellent morals. Moral miracles can accomplish what other miracles cannot. This is the meaning of the Ḥadīth Steadfastness is greater than miracles. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Today countless people enter Aḥmadiyyat who are impressed by the moral character of Aḥmadīs. Every Aḥmadī should remember that demonstrating high morals is a religious obligation that is the means for the reformation of others.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that faith requires seeking transformation with God's help and exerting one's own strength. It is related in a Ḥadīth that when a person raises hands for prayer with conviction, God never rejects his prayer. Therefore, seek from God and seek with certainty and sincerity. I again advise you that demonstrating great morals is the way to proving your excellence. The miracle of the morals works in every field. Good morals do not only mean speaking with kindness; rather it means the proper use of all of one's faculties, such as bravery, chastity, etc. A person who shows his neighbor how his moral condition has transformed from what it was before, in fact shows a miracle which readily affects the neighbor. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: It should be evident from our character that our Bai'at has brought about a transformation in us. May Allāh enable us to walk the path of *Taqwa*, and undergo a holy transformation, and follow in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and live our lives according to the expectations of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him).

At the end of the sermon Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) informed the Jamā'at of the sad demise of Lutf-ur-Rahman Sahib (son of late professor Mian Ata-ur-Rahman Sahib) of USA and Sahibzada Mirzā Umar Ahmad Sahib (son of late Dr. Sahibzada Mirzā Munawwar Ahmad Sahib) Nā'ib Sadr *Umoomi* of Rabwah. Huzoor led their funeral prayer in absentia after the Friday prayer.

Friday Sermon 16 June 2017 at Baitul-Futūh Mosque, London

Adopt truthfulness and humility and to avoid pride, arrogance, falsehood and other moral weaknesses.

Arrogance is a dangerous disease that sounds the spiritual death- knell for one who possesses it.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: In my last sermon, I spoke about *Taqwa* and high morals. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that a person becomes a *muttaqi* when he possesses all the good morals. A believer should strive for these morals, do what is commanded, and shun what is forbidden. However, there are some moral qualities which, if they be missing, can endanger one's very faith, and faith comes before *Taqwa*. The first of these moral conditions is to become steadfast upon the truth. Allah says: "Shun therefore the abomination of idols, and shun false speech." (22:31)

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says that falsehood estranges one from God. When a person ceases to have faith and trust in God, then God does not come near him. To become pure, it is essential to shun falsehood and idolatry. The Holy Qur'ān has declared falsehood to be a filth and abomination. Liars lose their credibility to the extent that even when they are telling the truth people imagine that there must be some element of falsehood in it. It is not easy for those who are in the habit of lying to let go of this habit, it takes long practice to do so.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: Remember, there is nothing so obnoxious as falsehood. People commonly say that those who lie are apprehended, but how can I believe this; I faced seven lawsuits and, by the grace of God, never had to utter one word of falsehood, but did God allow me to be defeated in even one of these cases? God is the friend and helper of the truthful, how then can he punish them. Had this been the case, no one would dare to speak the truth and people would completely lose faith in God? The fact is that those who are punished after speaking the truth are not punished because of that truth but because of some other hidden sins or lies. It is therefore important to make a habit of virtue and to keep seeking forgiveness for our shortcomings.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Most often marriages end up in divorce because of lies, even though the verse recited in the Nikah clearly says: "O ye who believe! fear Allāh, and say the right word." (33:71)

He will bless your works for you and forgive you your sins. And whoso obeys Allāh and His Messenger, shall surely attain a mighty success." Allāh exhorts us to attain the highest levels of truthfulness so that we are saved from troubles and our children are saved from evil. In our society, the main reason for divorce is estrangement form religious values. There is no one to guide worldly people, but if those who have found guidance resort to falsehood then it has grave consequences. Some people tell their kids to tell visitors or callers on the phone that dad is not at home. In this way they inculcate the habit of falsehood in their children. There are people who lie just because of habit, or for hurting others, or to make people laugh, or for self-praise, or for personal and financial gain, or for covering their mistakes, or for avoiding people. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: We should set high standards of truthfulness.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: The Holy Qur'ān forbids us from bearing false testimony either for financial gain or for any other reason. Do not murder the truth. If you find the truth on the side of your enemy, then let go of your dry logic. Be steadfast on the truth and testify accordingly. A Christian once objected that the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has permitted the telling of lies for three purposes. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said that this is completely false. The Holy Qur'ān has declared falsehood to be akin to idolatry and has forbidden falsehood even against enemies and exhorts us to hold on to justice. When people adhere to the truth, then one will not deceive the other. Eating what is forbidden is not as harmful as falsehood. Tame your tongues and do not let your tongues govern you. We should always be mindful that we are established on such a high level of truthfulness as saves us from idolatry and enables us to attain higher stages of *Taqwa*. Let everyone do some introspection and get rid of any falsehood they find in themselves.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Another high moral is adopting humility and shunning arrogance. Allāh does not love the arrogant boaster. Some people if they do good deeds for two days, they become proud. If someone sees a dream in Ramaḍān, he becomes arrogant. This should be avoided. Remember that arrogance comes from Satan, and unless one moves away from it, it becomes a hurdle in the path of accepting the truth and receiving divine grace. One should not be arrogant about one's knowledge, one's wealth, one's family or one's lineage, since these are the main motivators of arrogance. Unless man cleanses

himself of such arrogance he cannot attain nearness to God and he will not be granted the cognition that consumes the carnal passions, because these come from Satan and God does not love them. Satan showed arrogance and considered himself superior to Adam, hence was rejected by God. Adam on the other hand was given knowledge and so he admitted his mistake and received God's blessings. He knew that nothing can be attained other than through God's grace and prayed: "Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves; and if Thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, we shall surely be of the lost." (7:24)

This is one of the prayers the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) has urged us to offer, and we should do so particularly in these last ten days of Ramaḍān.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: Do not be proud or arrogant in any way; this in my view is the best way to attain piety. When someone is granted insight, he realizes that all the light that drives away darkness comes from heaven and that man is ever in need of heavenly light. The inner light that dispels darkness and produces the light of purity and piety comes from heaven. I say truly that *taqwa*, faith, worship, purity, all come from heaven and are dependent on God's grace.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: True knowledge means that man should consider himself as a mere nothing and seek God's grace with the utmost humility and seek the knowledge that consumes the passions of the self and creates a power and passion for righteousness. In order to do away with arrogance, it is essential to attribute every good thing to God. One who recognizes this starts to be free from his moral weaknesses. He considers himself worthless and he does not deem the light and knowledge he receives as being a result of his own ability, rather he believes it to be from divine grace and mercy.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: Pride is a dangerous disease which sounds the spiritual death knell for whoever has it. The arrogant person is the brother of Satan. It was arrogance that caused Satan to be cast away in degradation. Therefore, it is essential for a believer that he has no pride and instead is filled with humility and meekness. This is the hallmark of God's chosen people that they possess the utmost humility, and most of all it was to be found in the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: God now desires that the time of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) should return and the same piety and purity should be established, and He wishes to accomplish this through this Jamā'at. Therefore, turn towards reformation in the manner taught by the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) prayed, may Allāh enable us to follow the example of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), to avoid all evils, and to acquire the higher morals. May our humility be such as to please God. And may we become such members of the Jamā'at as the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) wanted to see us. *Āmīn*

Friday Sermon 23 June 2017 at Baitul-Futūh Mosque, London

Ramaḍān is a training camp.

Fortunate are those who come under God's refuge by offering prayers and keeping fasts.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: The month of Ramaḍān came and is quickly coming to an end. Despite the long days and hot weather, most people are saying that they did not find the fasting to be as difficult as expected. God, by His grace, has made it easy for us.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: We need to do some introspection about what we achieved in these blessed days, for only then will we be able to fulfill the purpose of fasting. During these days, Allāh comes closer to His servants and hears their prayers; hence, we need to see what we did to reap Allāh's blessings, and what pledges we made to follow divine commandments and overcome our weaknesses. If we became punctual in prayers only because of Ramaḍān and grow lax afterwards, we are not following God's commandment. Ramaḍān is a training camp. The virtues we acquire in Ramaḍān should be continued and then taken to an even higher level in the following Ramaḍān. Allāh enjoins us to offer our prayers with care and attention and to safeguard the prayers that fall between our other activities and businesses.

The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says that every prayer, every Jumu'a, and every Ramaḍān becomes a source of salvation until the next prayer, the next Jumu'a, and the next Ramaḍān, unless one commits a major sin. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says that anyone who skips three Jumu'as continuously and

intentionally, God seals his heart.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: There are a lot of misconceptions about the obligation of offering *Jumu'a-tul-Wada*, while the fact is that every Jumu'a is equally obligatory. Allāh says: "O ye who believe! when the call is made for Prayer on Friday, hasten to the remembrance of Allāh, and leave off all business. That is better for you, if you only knew." (62:10)

The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says: "When the day of Friday arrives there are angels upon the door of every mosque to record the names of worshippers in the order in which they arrive and when the Imām starts to deliver the sermon they close their scrolls." Huzoor said: Those who come late to Jumu'a habitually should take heed from this. Jumu'a is only obligatory for men; but if women also come to attend, it is a source of spiritual reward for them as well. Happy are those who do justice to their prayers, Jumu'a and fasting and thus come under God's protection.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Ramaḍān is also a month in which we are drawn towards the recitation of the Holy Qur'ān and everyone tries to complete its recitation at least once. Along with the importance of prayers, Allāh also says: "Verily, the recitation of *the Qur'an* at dawn is *especially* acceptable *to God*." (17:79)

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said it is also important to read the translation of the Holy Qur'ān. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says, "Those who honor the Holy Qur'ān shall be honored in heaven." And, "Do not abandon the Holy Qur'ān, for in it is your life. Those who give precedence to the Holy Qur'ān above every other word shall be given precedence in heaven." Thus, we should never grow lax in its recitation and should continue it even after Ramaḍān along with other virtues. We are fortunate that Allāh has enabled us to pledge allegiance to the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) who has guided us to the right path.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) exhorts us again and again to undergo a transformation. Until a person sincerely and truthfully closes all the unlawful doors to himself and spreads his hands before God, he is not worthy of receiving God's help and succor. And when he comes to His door with cries and supplications, such a condition draws God's help and grace. If a person's heart is cleansed of selfish desires and darkness, the doors to mercy are opened for him; God takes him under His own protection and assumes the responsibility of providing for him. These are the standards we should constantly try to achieve.

What does the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) expect from us? He says that we should mold our lives according to the higher morals that Ramaḍān teaches us. Being elderly, we should have mercy on those who are younger. Being learned, we should advise and not scorn others. Being rich, should serve the poor and not be arrogant towards them. Fear God and keep aloof from the world. Hate every impurity and sin, for God is holy. Shun the path that leads to ruin. Adopt *taqwa*, do not worship God's creatures, turn towards your Lord and lead your lives for His sake. Every morning should bear witness that you spent the night with the fear of God; and every evening should bear witness that you spent your day with the fear of God. Become straight and clean and pure. God wishes you to undergo a complete transformation. He desires from you a death after which He will give you a new life. Be quick to reconcile and forgive the sins of your brother. Let go of your ego in every matter, let go of mutual discord; being truthful, show humility like a liar, so that you may be forgiven. If you wish that God in heaven is pleased with you, become one like brothers from the same womb. The most honored among you is the one who forgives his brother's sins; and unfortunate is he who remains adamant and does not forgive; he has no part in me.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: Beware of God's wrath, for He is Holy and has great sense of honor. A sinner cannot attain His nearness; an arrogant one cannot attain His nearness; a transgressor cannot attain His nearness; a cheat cannot attain His nearness; anyone who does not care for the honor of His name cannot attain His nearness; those who crave the world like dogs or ants or scavengers and find their comfort in the world cannot attain His nearness. Every impure eye is far from Him; every impure heart is unaware of Him. He who is in fire for His sake will be saved from fire. He who cries for His sake will laugh. He who withdraws from the world for His sake he will find Him. Become His friend with a sincere heart and with zealous devotion; then He too shall become your friend. Have mercy on your subordinates, your wives, your poor brothers so that heaven should have mercy on you. Become truly His so that He may become yours.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says, "For mankind, there is no book on the face of the earth except the Holy Qur'an, and for all children of Adam, there is no Messenger and Intercessor but Muḥammad, the Chosen One. Endeavour to cultivate true love for that Prophet of dignity and majesty, and do not give anyone else any kind of preference over him, so that in heaven you may be counted as those who have attained salvation." "Do not think highly of your apparent pledge of Bai'at, for apparent Bai'at is nothing; God watches your hearts and will deal with you

accordingly.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: We should come out of Ramaḍān with the pledge that we shall lead our lives in accordance with the commandment of God and His Prophet. May Allāh enable us to do so. *Āmīn*.

At the end of the sermon, Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) informed the Jamā'at of the sad demise of Mushtaq Zahrah Sahiba, wife of late Chaudhary Zahoor Ahmad Bajwa; and Abdul Bakr Sahib of Egypt. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) led their funeral prayer in absentia after the Juma'a prayer.

Friday Sermon 30 June 2017 at Baitul Futūh Mosque, London

The world is on the brink of destruction and a world war seems to be looming.

We should feel true sympathy for others, when we pray for them.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Ramaḍān comes with countless blessings and those who understand this are able to reap them. Many have written to me that they were able to perform *Nawafil* in addition to the obligatory worship, that they completed a course of reciting the Holy Quran, that they had strange and pleasurable spiritual experiences, that they experienced the acceptance of their prayers and attained certainty in the existence of God. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Those who have strived in such a way, may Allāh forgive any shortcomings on their part and continue to bless them forever. May Allāh continue to elevate the status of those who attained high stations as well as those who strived even a little bit. They should also pray for themselves so that they may not become lax in terms of fulfilling their obligations to Allāh and to His creatures.

When God says that He comes close to His servant when he prays to Him, this statement is not limited to Ramaḍān, rather He says that He answers the prayers of the distressed person when he calls upon Him. Allāh is not bound only to bestow His nearness in Ramaḍān. This month has only been specified to draw our attention. The pronouncement "I am near" is for all times.

Drawing our attention to prayer, the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says that God is closest to His servant in the middle part of the night, and if possible one should remember Him at that hour. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: If you have acquired the habit of offering *Nawafil* in Ramaḍān, then you should try to adopt it permanently. If we are fully determined, we can always continue to benefit from God's nearness. When God is close to man, man comes under His refuge. One who remembers God is like the living, and one who doesn't is like the dead. To confine remembrance of God to a few days makes a person spiritually dead. If we want to be among the truly living, we ought to remember God in the remaining 11 months as well. Having come under God's protection in Ramaḍān, we should use all the means to permanently keep ourselves under His protection.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Our Lord is independent and besought of all, He does not care for someone unless one fervently and consistently prays to Him. It is important that we feel true sympathy when we pray for someone. Just as we pray fervently for ourselves, in the same way we should pray for the Jamā'at, for the Muslim *Ummah*, and for our respective countries. We should also pray that God may remove the dangers that are looming over the world today. We should not keep even our enemies out of our prayers. The greater the scope of the prayer, the greater the benefit to the one who prays. And the more miserly one is in one's prayers, the further he is from God.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: In our routine prayers we should include the Jamā'at. Everyone is well aware of the situation in Pakistan. Time and again lawsuits are made against the Jamā'at or Aḥmadīs are harassed in other ways by the Maulawīs or by government officials. May Allāh save every Ahmadī from their mischief. Sometimes the governments do certain things to create law and order situations which help them implement harsh laws that help strengthen their governments. Such acts were also perpetrated by past governments. Therefore, special prayers are needed. Aḥmadīs in Pakistan should particularly pray for themselves. We have never taken the law into our own hands, nor sought revenge, nor shall we do so in future. It is only the weapon of prayer that we shall always use. Allāh has always saved us from their designs and will continue to do so and the Jamā'at shall progress more than before.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Similar activities are going on in Algeria, but all Aḥmadīs with a very few exceptions remain steadfast in their faith. One Aḥmadī wrote that though the Jamā'at was only established ten years ago, their history of making sacrifices goes a long way back. The government is also bewildered that these people neither turn back from

their faith nor show any negative reaction. This is because they have the weapon of prayer and they know that their time of tribulation will come to an end and God will listen to their prayers. Before God, worldly powers are of no worth. Trials do come and sacrifices have to be made, but the ultimate victory belongs to those who remain with God. History of the Jamā'at shows that at every occasion God remained with the Jamā'at and protected it, and the enemy was always frustrated.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Those who think they are not in direct danger and are therefore lax in their prayers should remember that these trials can come upon them as well. Before this should come to pass, they should turn their attention to prayer. Even if you are living in ease and security, you should pray for your Aḥmadī brothers with an anguished heart that Allāh may help them in their tribulations. When one prays for others, one's own difficulties are also removed.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Those living in western countries should not consider themselves safe, because Aḥmadīs will also be affected by the rising anti-Muslim sentiment. Although we say that we are peace loving Muslims, anyone can blindly attack us. Such incidents have started taking place whereby anti-Muslims and nationalists have started activities against Muslims.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: The situation in the whole world is such that that it is inviting God's displeasure. World powers are trying to cause rifts among Muslim nations, and these circumstances can set these countries back by decades. America has dangerous aims. A conflict has been created in Syria which could lead Iran to send in its forces, and that will give America and Israel reason to vent their antagonism towards Islām. Big powers are very cunningly trying to weaken Muslim states. However, these conflicts will not be confined to a particular area, Russia will also come in and it can all turn into a world war. Muslim countries will go back decades. The tensions between America and Korea are also growing and commentators say that the use of even a small weapon by America could escalate into a terrible war in the region. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said that new inventions can also become a means of destruction, such as cyber-attacks particularly if they're employed in manipulating weapons of mass destruction. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: The world is creating the means for its own destruction.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Most Muslim leaders have already antagonized their own people by committing atrocities against them, and they commit even greater atrocities to save their rule, but this is not the solution. The solution is the one told by the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) , which is to accept the Promised Mahdi. We are fortunate that, in keeping with the command of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) , we have accepted the Promised Mahdi. Today the world can only be saved in the way told by the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him). Only Aḥmadīs can save the world through their heartfelt prayers. Every Aḥmadī should feel the suffering of all the people of the world and pray for them. Calamities are fast enveloping the world. While we spread the message that salvation only lies in coming under the protection of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him), we should also pray fervently that God may bring the world to its senses and save them from destruction.

May Allāh enable us to bring the world under the banner of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). May we employ all the means and take our prayers to the extreme to bring this about. After Ramaḍān, also, we should continue to come closer to Allāh through worship and prayers. May Allāh grant us the ultimate success. *Āmīn*.

Friday Sermon 7 July 2017 at Baitul Futūh Mosque, London

God guides righteous people despite opposition and satanic attacks.

In every age we have seen and continue to see the fulfillment of God's assurance to the Promised Messiah that "I am with you and with those whom you love."

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: The Prophets are always opposed and as they progress, so does the opposition towards them grow. The same was destined for the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) and his Jamā'at. While informing beforehand of the opposition the Jamā'at would face, God also gave the glad tiding of the progress of the Jamā'at. Allāh revealed to the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) that He would cause the community of his true followers to grow and that He was with him and with those he loved. And that he would be helped by those to whom God Himself would reveal. He would grant him honor and cause him to flourish. He would cause his message to reach the corners of the earth. And it is written that "Allāh has decreed: Most surely, I will prevail, I and My Messengers." (58:22)

There are countless other revelations to this effect. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: In every age we see the practical manifestation of these glad tidings.

While at times God turns the opponents' machinations upon them, at other times He guides people to the right path.

Citing some examples of Divine support Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: A *Mu'allim* Sahib wrote that he went to a village where he had some relatives and there he also met a non-Ahmadī *Maulawī* and introduced the Jamā'at, upon which this *Maulawī* became angry and started abusing the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) and Aḥmadiyyat. The *Mu'allim* Sahib said that we have been taught to reply with prayers in response to abuse. The *Maulawī* said if you simultaneously come across a snake and Aḥmadī then you should leave the snake and kill the Aḥmadī first. The *Maulawī* warned the *Mu'allim* Sahib that if he was ever seen in the village again he would face an evil end. The *Mu'allim* Sahib said that only time will tell who will face an evil end. Later, *Maulawī* Iqbal, who had verbally abused the Jamā'at, suddenly died of heart attack. Even non-Aḥmadīs were moved by this sign in support of Aḥmadiyyat.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Some people seek true faith and God opens their hearts to it. A missionary from Ivory Coast writes that they went to a place for Tablīgh and informed the people about the coming of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him). When they went back after some time, 15 people including the Imam accepted Aḥmadiyyat. The new converts were told that an Ijtimā' was near and the Imām should send a person to go and see it. He was greatly impressed by what he saw. Sometime later we went back to the same village and 26 more people accepted Aḥmadiyyat.

A missionary from Benin writes that a new Jamā'at was established in a village and 87 people pledged the Bai'at. The Imām was trained and the Friday prayers started. The opposing *Maulawīs* did their best to turn people back from Aḥmadiyyat and, when they failed, they reported to the King, who called the Ahmadīs and told them that if they wanted the mosque they would have to leave Aḥmadiyyat. The President of the Jamā'at told the King that Aḥmadiyyat was true Islām and that the *Maulawīs* were deceiving him, and that they would leave the village but not turn back from Aḥmadiyyat. Such is the faith of these poor people! The King was moved by this and he said, "You do not need to leave the village. Do as you please." Thus God softened his heart and helped the believers.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: God Himself opens people's hearts. A brother from Egypt writes that he saw the house of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) in Qādiān emerging out of the earth like a plant and saw light emanating from it. He said that because of Ahmadiyyat he attained nearness to Allāh.

A brother from Morocco writes that after research he found Aḥmadiyyat to be the Divine Jamā'at. If Mirzā Sahib was false, then how could his son be teaching the verities of the Holy Qur'ān. As I reflected upon this, I remembered the prophecy of the Holy Prophet that when the Messiah comes, he will get married, and have extraordinary progeny. I realized that this was the son who had written the *Tafsir-e-Kabeer*, and then I pledged the Bai'at.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said sometimes God guides people through dreams. A sister writes that she heard the Promised Messiah's (may peace be upon him) Qaseedah on MTA Arabia and then pledged the Bai'at. After this she continues to receive Divine blessings and witnesses the signs of the acceptance of her prayers.

A brother from Yemen writes that he adopted various sects but did not find true Islam anywhere. However he was deeply moved to hear the teachings of Islām on MTA Arabia and was guided towards the true faith in a dream.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Allāh enables people to accept Aḥmadiyyat in spite of satanic attacks. Allāh said to the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) that He would spread his message to the corners of the earth and that his name would be remembered with honor till the end of the world. Those who try to humiliate you will themselves die frustrated. Allāh says, I will increase the community of your sincere followers and will bless their lives and wealth, and I will grant victory to your Jamā'at. God will not forget the opponents and the envious, and the believers shall find reward according to their sincerity. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: When we witness the fulfillment of so many promises, we shall also witness the promise of our becoming a majority. We shall always triumph in terms of argument, but we need to keep increasing in sincerity.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: Do our opponents believe that through their schemes, baseless allegations and fabrications they will prevent the Will of God from succeeding, or through their deception they wish to keep the world bereft from receiving its blessings? God Almighty has decreed this. If in the past the opponents of the truth had some success, then they may still succeed. However, if it is an established fact that the opponents of God who oppose His heavenly decree always suffer humiliation and defeat, then for such people there is a day that is decreed for their downfall. The decree of God has never failed, nor will it ever in the future. God's words "Allāh has decreed: Most surely I will prevail, I and My Messengers." (58:22) were and shall always remain true.

Friday Sermon 14 July 2017 at Baitul-Futūh Mosque, London

Parents are reminded about responsibilities in upbringing of their children in accordance with the teachings of Islām.

Be virtuous and set a righteous example for your children; pray and strive to make them righteous.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Many men and women when they write or meet in person ask to pray for their to be born child or ask how they can keep their kids pious who are on the threshold of adulthood. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said that, by the grace of Allāh, even in this materialistic age most Aḥmadīs are concerned about the proper upbringing of their children. The Holy Qur'ān on various occasions has taught us prayers to be offered prior to the birth of a child and afterwards, and thus it also reminds us of our responsibilities. There is no doubt that proper upbringing of children is a difficult task and everyday new satanic devices are becoming a hurdle in this path. Therefore, we need constant prayers and struggle. A true believer is expected to attach himself to God and save himself and his children from Satan and not allow negative thinking. We need to utilize all our capabilities in order to become part of the revolution for which the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) was sent, and we have to inculcate the spirit in our future generations and not allow Satan to succeed. There is no reason for despair. We have to move on with a strong resolve and follow the guidelines set by Allāh. The Holy Qur'ān teaches us to pray: "My Lord, grant me from Thyself pure offspring; surely, Thou art the Hearer of prayer." (3:39)

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Along with prayers, parents should also be pure of thought and conduct. Sometimes mothers are more inclined towards faith than men, but in order to save our children from the evil effect of the environment, it is necessary that both men and women should be pious and virtuous. As we pray for our children in the words of Ḥaḍrat Zachariah (may peace be upon him), we should also bring about a pious change in ourselves.

Once a man came to the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) and said, "Pray for me, if I have a son I will become an Aḥmadī." The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) said I have come as the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) and I have not come to bring people male offspring. However Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) prayed for another person who as a result was blessed with a male child as desired by him. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Sometimes people also write to me that if such and such of their desire are met they will become Aḥmadī. Such acceptance has no meaning.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: There is also the prayer of Ḥaḍrat Zachariah (may peace be upon him): "My Lord, leave me not childless, and Thou art the Best of inheritors." (21:90)

This prayer can only be offered by those who give preference to their faith over the world. We should not only pray for pious progeny, but for progeny that is pious and righteous and a servant of the faith. Being tried on account of one's children is a great tribulation, hence if one's progeny is righteous he has nothing to worry about. God Himself says: "He protects the righteous". Whoever subjugates his own ideas to the will of God is contented on the part of his children.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: "Be virtuous yourself and present an excellent example of piety and *Taqwa* for you children and strive to make them virtuous and pious. You should strive for this just as you strive to accumulate wealth for them."

Pray to Allāh consistently and set an example. Allāh says that those who wish to be saved from Satan's attacks have the following qualities, They pray that: "Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of *our* eyes, and make us a model for the righteous." (25:75)

Both parents should offer this prayer. Both mother and father are guardians and they can only do justice to the upbringing of their children if both walk in the path of *Taqwa* and watch over their actions. Allāh says that if you wish to have a righteous progeny then you should watch over your own actions, otherwise your desire for righteous progeny will only be a claim. Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: Many people ask me to pray that their children may be righteous, but when I ask them about their own five-time prayers, they say, "We try to offer them." Thus they are false in claiming that they desire a righteous progeny. The desire to have progeny just so that they may continue one's name is an idolatrous desire.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: "Some people only desire heirs for their property. But in fact we should desire children who are servants of the faith." And if we desire righteous progeny we must act upon Allah's commandments. It is a great responsibility of parents to pray for their children and set examples for them. If one's own conduct is contrary to the teachings of faith, then the prayer for righteous progeny are not well-intentioned. Both father and

mother should pray: "Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of *our* eyes" (25:75), and this prayer teaches us to act in a way that we become models for our children. Thus, in the Holy Qur'ān while Allāh teaches us to pray, He also stresses the need for us to scrutinize our own actions. If a person continues to sin, then what can he desire from his children other than to leave heirs for his sins. If your desire for children is not for the purpose of faith and piety, then it is a frivolous and sinful desire. It is often seen that people desire children, but rarely do we see them worrying about making them virtuous. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says: "There is no Ṣalāt in which I do not pray for my companions, my children and my wife." There are many parents who teach their children bad habits. And when the children learn bad habits they do not admonish them, and consequently they become bold and audacious.

Huzoor (may Allāh be his Helper) said: One should not desire children just to be one's heirs, rather one should desire them to be servants of the faith. The parents of *Waqf-e-Nau* children should be even more mindful of this. Most people do everything for the love of the world and not for God. If we desire children it should in keeping with the verse "Make us a model for the righteous," so that we have progeny that becomes the means for spreading the message of Islām. If such is one's desire then God has the power to grant progeny as He did in the case of Ḥaḍrat Zachariah (may peace be upon him). Parents of *Waqf-e-Nau* children should pray that may their children be counted among those who give preference to their faith over the world and not merely take on the title of *Waqf-e-Nau*, and that they should uphold the honor of their family and be virtuous. One should always pray for the piety and virtue of one's children. If you become truly pious and virtuous then rest assured that God will be kind to your children. The Holy Qur'ān relates the episode of Moses and *Khidr* who mended a wall that belonged to orphaned children, regarding whom Allāh says: "Their father was righteous". This is what we should strive for. May Allāh enable every one of us to give preference to our faith over the world. Instead of looking at others, let us strive for our own reformation. Let us constantly pray for our children. *Āmīn*.

Friday Sermon 21 July 2017 at Baitul-Futūh Mosque, London

Visitors who come to the Jalsa listen to the teachings of Islām and witness the practical example of these teachings through the hospitality of the volunteers.

Guidance regarding hospitality. Everyone is a host in his own sphere.

Huzoor (may Allah be his Helper) said: God willing, Jalsa Sālāna UK will start from next Friday. Participants have already started arriving from other countries. As the Jalsa draws nearer, more people from UK towns and cities will start arriving. In addition to Aḥmadīs who come to the Jalsa to partake of its blessings, many non-Aḥmadī and non-Muslim friends also come to attend, and these include government officials, scholars, and other people of influence. Likewise, there is a growing participation by the media. The visitors keenly observe everything they see and are impressed by the work done by the volunteers. This opens new avenues for Tablīgh. Thus, during the days of the Jalsa, all our volunteers, men, women, young and old are doing silent Tablīgh. Our message is broadcast on a very wide scale throughout the world via the media and press organizations. The press also gives coverage to the Jamā'at when there are other events such as the recent terrorist attacks in Europe. They air interviews of our missionaries and thus we are being introduced widely in the world as the Jamā'at that promotes the peaceful teachings of Islām.

Huzoor (may Allah be his Helper) said: God provides vast resources for spreading the message of Islām through the Jalsa. While Aḥmadīs try to grow in spirituality, non-Aḥmadī guests and members of the press listen to our teachings and witness the practical example of Islam's teachings through the atmosphere of the Jalsa and the voluntary work done by Aḥmadī men and women. Thus, the Jalsa is a major means for Tablīgh. The volunteers have a great role to play in this, and this should be borne in mind by worker and officers alike. While the attitude, diligence and hard work of a common worker invites God's pleasure, it also impresses the guests. Officers should not only direct the workers but should themselves work with humility and keep their demeanor and their attitude soft.

Huzoor (may Allah be his Helper) said: The department of hospitality is of vital importance. Hospitality does only include serving food and water and providing accommodation, but every department of the Jalsa is related to hospitality. Whoever comes to attend the Jalsa is a guest, and it is essential to take care of them and provide them with all the necessary

amenities. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says, “I am always careful that no guest has any difficulty, and I am always exhorting that the guests should be made as comfortable as possible.” “The heart of the guest is delicate like glass and can break at the slightest hurt.” Huzoor (may Allah be his Helper) said: We should always remember these teachings and provide comfort to the guests no matter how difficult it may be.

Every officer should have a soft attitude and good morals and the courage and patience to listen even to harsh things. If the officer shows patience, his assistant will do the same. And if the officer is harsh and severe, his assistants will behave in the same way. Every department should scrutinize itself from this standpoint.

Those responsible for accommodations should take special care to provide bedding for children. Even though it is summer, the weather can get cold at night, and the temperature at Hadiqatul-Mahdī is normally four to five degrees lower than in London. Those who arrange for their own accommodation should see to it that it is appropriate in every way.

When serving food to the guests, try to cater for their likes and dislikes. If you are unable to provide for them accordingly, then apologize in an appropriate manner and not in a harsh way that hurts their feelings.

The plates that were used previously added chemicals to the food above a certain temperature, but this year the plates being used are made of a special material. Those serving food should be guided about their proper use.

Since the parking is at a distance, a shuttle bus service has been arranged to bring the guests to the venue. Therefore, guests should try to arrive in time.

Every department should train its workers with a view to providing maximum facilities to the guests. Those working in security and Khidmat-e Khalq should be more vigilant than before and fulfil their duties while taking into account the self-respect of the guests. Help the guests in the process of card checking and scanning. Check everyone every time they enter, but they should not feel like they’re being treated unfairly. The fact however remains that the Jalsa is a temporary arrangement and such arrangement cannot be totally free of mistakes and shortcomings. Still, we have to do the best within our capacity and our resources to provide the guests with the care possible.

Huzoor (may Allah be his Helper) said: Every participant of the Jalsa is a guest of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him). Hence every guest has to be treated as a special guest. There is a department of supervision that draws the attention of departments towards their shortcoming, but every department officer should also appoint someone to supervise their own department. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) said: “The manager of the Langar Khana should take care of the guests’ needs, but since he is alone and when he forgets, others should remind him.”

Rich and poor should be served alike. The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says, “Sometimes new people don’t know about things. If they do not know where the toilets are, this can be very uncomfortable for them. Therefore, we should not give anyone occasion to complain because these people travel thousands of miles just to seek knowledge.”

Every volunteer of every department should exhibit the highest morals and should be able to bear even harshness from the guests. A companion wrote, “In terms of hospitality, the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) is a living example just like the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Even the slightest discomfort of the guests would make him restless. He was very passionate and compassionate in serving his seiner companions.” Huzoor (may Allah be his Helper) said: We should show a similar zeal in serving the guests of the Jalsa. It is said in a hadith, “For the day of judgment, three things are essential: firstly, to say something good or keep silent; secondly, to respect your neighbor; and thirdly, to honor your guest.” Thus, honoring the guests is also a precondition to being a believer. The Holy Prophet also used to wake up his guests for Fajr prayer. For this purpose, there is the Department of Tarbiyat who should wake up the guests for Tahajjud and Fajr prayers, but they should do so politely and respectfully. May Allāh enable all the volunteers to serve the guests of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) in the best manner.

At the end of the sermon, Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) informed the Jamā‘at of the sad demise of Sayyed Mir Muhammad Ahmad Sahib, son of late Ḥaḍrat Doctor Mir Muhammad Isma‘il Sahib; and of Mahmooda Begum Sahiba wife of Chaudhry Muhammad Siddique Sahib Bhatti and mother of Asghar Ali Bhatti Sahib, who is a missionary serving in Niger. Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) led their funeral prayer in absentia after the Jum‘a Prayer.

Full original text of Friday Sermons by the Caliphs of Aḥmadiyya Islam is available in print in Al-Fazl International, Al-Fazl Rabwah and Badr. These publications are also available online at alislam.org (under periodicals). Translations and summaries of Friday Sermons March are also available in various languages on alislam.org (under Friday Sermons).

Activities and News of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in USA

Month of fasting is month of purification of one's soul

Report By: Riyaz Ahmed, Chicago

Muslims across the world observed the holy month of Ramadan, which started on May 27th, 2017, as a period of intense prayer, supplication and help to humanity.

The Holy Quran was revealed to the Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) during the month of Ramadan 1400 years ago. The Muslims across the globe fast for the whole month and involve themselves in prayers in order to attain nearness to Almighty God.

During this month, we recited the Holy Quran and regular Lectures (Dars) were given by Imam Shamshad of Bait-ul-Jaami Mosque in Glen Ellyn. In his regular lectures which were based upon the teachings of Holy Quran, sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and sayings of the Promised Messiah Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qādiān (may peace be upon him), Imam Shamshad told the members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community about various topics which included the significance of fasting and prayers, how to build strong relationship with Almighty God, serving parents, serving humanity, respecting the elders and how to lead our life in the society in accordance to the teachings of Islam. He also mentioned that Muslims should involve themselves in sacrifices and charity, in this holy month to help the poor and needy.

Daily Iftar (breaking of the fast) was also arranged in the Mosque followed by the regular prayers and dinner.

Imam Shamshad invited many religious leaders of the area to come in our Aḥmadiyya Muslim Mosque to attend Qur'anic teaching and dinner. Some Muslims from Sierra Leone Community, Syrian families who recently came in this country and many from different churches attended.

Eid-ul-Fitr which marked the end of Ramadan was celebrated on 26th of June. In his Eid sermon, Imam Shamshad urged the members to continue to do the good deeds throughout the year which they practised in the month of Ramadan, and earning the nearness to God. Imam Shamshad also read the message from Mirza Maghfoor Ahmad, Amir Jamā'at Aḥmadiyya USA.

All the members then greeted Eid Mubarak to one another. There was an award ceremony. Imam Shamshad gave awards to children who finished first reading of the Quran and to those who completed reading the Holy Quran in the blessed month of Ramadan.

Important Forms/Links

Please find Guidelines and instructions for Nikah in USA, Premarital Counseling request, Binding Arbitration Agreement, Nikah Form at www.rishtanata.us.

Mulāqāt Form under General Secretary Department at www.ahmadiyya.us.

Educational loan, scholarship and Talent Award. The deadline for applications is May 15 of each year.

Email communication with Ta'lim Department scholarship.committee@ahmadiyya.us or info@educationahmadiyya.us.

LA Inland Empire participates in July 4th parade in Ontario.

1) Our float received All States Trophy which is Best use of Theme "America the Beautiful."

Jamā'at members prepared and decorated the float with this theme along with Muslims for Loyalty and as well Muslims for peace banners.

2) Over 80 Jamā'at members attended.

3) Parade was watched by over 20,000 people and this is biggest parade in terms of crowed and the largest in the San Bernardino county and Inland Empire cities.

4) Three booths were arranged along the 1.7-mile parade route. Each booth had water bottles with Muslims for Loyalty sticker, wrist bands and bookmakers which say "Love for all, hatred for none," Loyalty flyer, Muslim for Peace flyer, CC&TI and Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community flyers. Over 500 water bottles and many flyers were distributed.

5) People were very supportive. They applauded when our float passed by in front of them. Did not

receive any negative comment by the Grace of Allah from the parade watchers. Many people approached us and appreciated our effort that we are showing the correct picture of Islam.

6) Met many public officials such as Pro Tem Mayor City of Ontario, CA state Senator Convey Lye, City council member from City of Upland and Board of Supervisor of San Bernardino County and US congresswoman representing 35 congressional district Norma Torres , city of Ontario is in her district - she also confirmed to attend our Annual Jalsa at Harrisburg.

7) Rep Norma Torress also visited our float and appreciated our effort of taking part in the parade. This is 3rd year in a row that LA Inland participating in the annual July 4th parade in the city of Ontario.

8) The parade was shown live in the city of Ontario city public channel.

(Faheem Ahmed, President LA Inland Empire)

Coffee, Cake and the True Islam Sessions in the United States

Muslim Community in Seattle debunks extremist myths about Islam

The Bellevue Arts Museum welcomed the Seattle community on Sunday afternoon to enjoy cake, coffee, and conversation about Islam. Hosted by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community of Seattle, leaders of the organization encouraged Seattleites to engage in discussion about Islam from the source that knows best: a Muslim. Starting first with a presentation, attendees were educated on the organization's roots, and later the 11 principles of Islam. Following the presentation, the room was broken into three different groups, each discussion led by a member of the Ahmadiyya community. These members answered questions that ranged from different levels of understanding, such as the purpose of the Hijab to the equality between men and women.

Āmīn Ceremony in Columbus, Ohio

Āmīn ceremony of Usman Mobusher, son of Dr and Mrs. Mobusher Mahmud and Talha Farrukh, son of Mr. and Mrs. Farrukh Mahmud of Brampton Canada, was solemnized by Dr Abdul Salam Malik, President Columbus Ohio Chapter on 26th of June 2017 at Baitun-Nasir.

They are grandsons of Dr Mahmud Ahmad Nagi. Dr Nagi is the grandson of Ḥaḍrat Haji Muhammad Musa, the companion of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him).

Dr Malik listened from Usman and Talha few verses of the Holy Quran and then led silent prayer. Congratulations to both of them and their families. May Allah enable them to recite Quran daily. Āmīn.

Submit local news to

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Respected Mian Lutfur Rahman Mahmood Passes Away

Shafiq-ur-Rahman

Mian Lutfur Rahman Mahmood passed away at the age of 78 on Saturday, May 27, 2017 in Round Rock, Texas from congestive heart failure and related complications.

Mian Lutfur Rahman Mahmood was the eldest son of the late Professor Mian Ata-ur-Rahman (of T.I. College, Rabwah, Pakistan). Mahmood Sahib was born on July 19, 1938 in Bhera, Pakistan. He was educated in Bhera, Rabwah, and Lahore, Pakistan. He began his career teaching in Pakistan at T.I. High School in Rabwah in 1960.

While he was in Pakistan, he had the honor of serving as the Editor of Al-Manar (TI College Rabwah magazine) and Khalid (organ of Majlis Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya). He was a master of writing both humorous articles and serious essays that kept the reader absorbed from the beginning to the end.

In 1967, he was sent to Sierra Leone by the Jamā'at. He served as the founding principal of Nasir Ahmadiyya Secondary School Kenema as well as Regional Missionary of Kenema. He later served as principal of Ahmadiyya Secondary School in Bo Town. He also had the honor of serving as Missionary In-Charge of Sierra Leone in the absence of Maulana Khalil Ahmad Mobashir. As a teacher and principal, he distinguished himself as caring and hardworking, and was widely respected for his compassionate, self-sacrificing nature. He went great lengths to ensure his students and even complete strangers had access to a good education.

In 1995, after three decades of dedicated service in Sierra Leone, Mahmood Sahib moved to the United States of America and became a resident of Round Rock, Texas where he continued to serve the Jamā'at. He was one of the pioneers of the Austin Jamā'at, and for years, regularly delivered the weekly khutba for Jum'a Prayers. He also delivered inspiring speeches on many occasions including for Eid celebrations, Ijtimas, and interfaith gatherings. Over the years, he served as Za'im Ansarullah and Secretary Tabligh, Wasaya, and Isha'at. Members of the Austin Jamā'at affectionately called him "Murrabi Sahib." He also served as a member of the US Qada Board.

He was a devoted and sincere servant of Ahmadiyya Khilāfat. Allah blessed Mahmood Sahib with a brilliant mind and limitless intellectual curiosity. His articles were published in various Jama 'at publications. The Holy Qu'ran, Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), comparative studies of religions, defense of Islam and Holy Prophet Mohammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and the blessings of the institution of Khilāfat were regular themes of his writings. He had a great love for and deep knowledge of the Holy Qu'ran. For years, he regularly gave Darsul-Quran in Austin, even when his health was failing and members would request him to take a break. Despite his accomplishments and vast knowledge, he embodied the utmost humility and shied away from praise.

His funeral prayer was offered at Bait-ul-Muqeet Mosque in Round Rock, Texas on Sunday, May 28, 2017. Immediately following his funeral, he was laid to rest in Dar-ul-Mughfira cemetery in Georgetown, Texas. He is survived by his wife (Zia Khawar Mahmood), two daughters, three sons, and many grandchildren. May Allah guide and protect them. (Amen)

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Qaḍā Orientation Seminar

Mubarik Ahmad Malik, Nazim Qaḍā Board USA

Under the guidance from Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V (may Allah be his helper), Dārul-Qaḍā USA held a two-day training seminar on April 8 and 9, 2017 at Baitur-Rahman Mosque in Silver Spring, Maryland.

The preparation for this seminar started in earnest in December 2016. Huzoor had graciously instructed Respected Zaheer Ahmad Khan, Professor of Fiqh, Jāmi'a Ahmadiyya UK and a permanent guest on the MTA Program Fiqhi Masa'il to participate in this seminar. Keeping in view his schedule and availability, the dates of April 8 and 9, 2017 were chosen for this seminar. To gain maximum benefit from his knowledge and experience, a comprehensive two-day program was devised under guidance of respected Amīr USA and Chairman Qaḍā Board USA. The program covered all relevant issues pertaining to Qaḍā and Fiqh. All Qadi Awwals and Members Qaḍā Board (a total of 30), which are spread all over the USA, were repeatedly reminded to participate in the seminar. Under instruction from Respected Amīr USA, representatives from Anṣārullāh, Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya, Lajna Imā'illāh, Umur Amma department, Ahmadiyya Muslim Lawyers Association USA, and Presidents and Majalis Amila of chapters at a driving distance from Baitur-Rahman Mosque were invited to attend this seminar. By the grace of Allah, the total attendance was 70. It is worth mentioning that the attendance of Qadi Awwals and Members Qaḍā Board was 90%. We were honored that Respected Amīr USA especially traveled to Maryland to grace and address this seminar. Various speakers spoke in this seminar on the topics below:

- The history and evolution of Qaḍā
- The structure of Qaḍā
- How to conduct Qaḍā hearings
- How to write Qaḍā decisions
- Which sources of law to rely on
- The responsibilities of Qaḍā to be fair, just, neutral, and honest

In addition, three panel discussions on various topics were also a part of the program. The panel moderators and panel members shared their thoughts on these topics and answered attendees' questions.

Respected Zaheer Ahmad Khan spoke on the topics mentioned below. Participants benefited from his knowledge and experience:

- Justice and impartiality in light of the Holy Quran and the Hadith
- Art of making and writing Qaḍā decisions
- The Qaḍā decisions (Rules of evidence, burden of proof, confidentiality)
- Moral responsibilities of a Qāḍī (Neutrality, conflict of interest, external pressure)
- Articles of Fiqh in light of common issues faced in a routine life

During the seminar, Zaheer Ahmad Khan continually answered participants' questions on various topics fully and satisfactorily. The participants were completely satisfied with the answers and immensely benefitted from his presence at this seminar.

We pray to Almighty Allah to make this seminar extremely beneficial for the participants, especially for Qāḍī Awwals and members Qaḍā Board and they may be able to discharge their duties appropriately in light of these instructions, Āmīn.

International News

Central province chief minister and governor presented with the translation of Holy Quran in Sinhala

"I commend your noble task, as I am in search of such a Holy Book in a complete form." remarked Governor of Central Province, Sri Lanka. A four member delegation from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at Sri Lanka (AMJSL) comprising Mr. A. Abdul Aziz, Press Secretary and National Director Faith Outreach– AMJSL; Moulavi A.B. Musthaq Ahmad – Chief Missionary AMJSL; Moulavi K.M. Munir Ahmad, Missionary – Pasyala; and Javid Raheem, Murabbi Silsila, visited Kandy, the capital of Central Province of Sri Lanka recently. The delegation visited Vihara Mahadevi Balika Maha Vidyalaya and was warmly welcomed by Mrs. Hapughama, the Principal. She appeared very incentive to what the delegation had to say. Source: AMI Sri Lanka

The delegation was briefed about the community and highlighted the tireless efforts being made by the Khalīfa of the Ahmadiyya worldwide leader, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, in spreading the true teachings of Islam through various means, particularly addressing lawmakers at Capitol Hill, EU Parliament, in Ireland Parliament, the Dutch Parliament and New Zealand Parliament to name a few.

Jihad must promote goodwill, not violence

By Alexander Nyarko Yeboah, GNA

Tema, May 7, GNA - Alhaji Abdul-Wahab Issah, National Secretary of Taḥrīk-I-Jadīd, Naib Afsar of Jalsa Planning Committee, Ghana, of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, says Jihad must only be promoted and supported if it promotes goodwill and not violence.

The conference which was on the theme, "Financial Sacrifice, A Jihad of our Time ," was organized to raise funds to purchase a cemetery plot for the circuit. Alhaji Issah said "Jihad must be the most controversial phenomenon in today's world. It is arguably the most misunderstood term in the religion of Islam." According to Alhaji Issah, the media had failed in its portrayal of miscreants who perpetrate violence as jihadists.

First ever Jalsa Salana of Jamā'at Ahmadiyya Haiti

Over 200 attendees joined at the first ever Jalsa Sālāna of Jamā'at Ahmadiyya Haiti. This figure included 49 Non-Ahmadī guests. Thirty seven people walked 50 km to attend this Jalsa from a neighboring city attesting to the revelation "Ya'tūna Min Kulli Fajjin 'Amīq," (they will come from far off places). The first ever Jalsa Sālāna of worldwide Jamā'at had 75 attendees. Now after 136 years, this first Jalsa Salana was held in a very small newly formed Jamā'at Haiti.

Huzoor Aqdas sent a special Message for this Jalsa Sālāna. Al-Hamdu Lillah, the Haitians followed the Jamā'at tradition of hosting a Jalsa Sālāna for the first time.

Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Australia offered land to build a mosque

A 4000 square meters block was offered to Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Australia to build a mosque as reported by Canberra Times Australia-ACT news 4/29. A vacant block behind the Narrabundah Ball

Park could soon be home to the first permanent Ahmadi mosque in Canberra.

Jamā'at Ahmadiyya Congo organized the Peace Symposium

The Jamā'at in the Republic of Congo held a Peace Symposium in Congo. Interior Minister attended the session. Over 500,000 people heard it via electronic media. Amir Jamā'at Benin also attended the Conference.

Glimpse of the 85th Jalsa Sālāna of Jamā'at Aḥmadiyya Ghana

A scene before Salat - a sea of worshippers. More than 31,000 people attended this gathering. The President of Ghana also attended this auspicious gathering (Annual Convention).

Jamā'at Aḥmadiyya to establish University in Osun

The First International University of Technology in Nigeria

Aḥmadiyyat Muslim Jamā'at Nigeria will soon join league of religious organizations in Nigeria that own universities as it has proposed to establish a university in Osun State. Already, 250 hectares of land have been acquired for the establishment of the tertiary institution to be called International University of Technology, Ikirun. The re-elected National Secretary, Publications/Media Relations of Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at Nigeria, Alhaji Qosim Akinreti, disclosed this to *Daily Champion* last weekend in Lagos shortly after the annual post-Ramadan get-together.

Alhaji Akinreti said: The proposal for the establishment of the university is already with the National Universities Commission (NUC) for approval.

He further said the Jamā'at would use the opportunity of its forthcoming International Conference (*Jalsa Sālāna*) in London to inform other member countries and the whole world about the proposed university.

According to him, the aim of establishing the University of Technology is to, among others, contribute to the technological advancement in the country.

Jalsa Sālāna Italy

Jamā'at Aḥmadiyya in Italy held their Jalsa Sālāna on May 12, 13 and 14, 2017 at their Headquarter. Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V (may Allah be his Helper) delivered his Friday Sermon in 2010 there and also visited the

'Shroud of Turin' during his tour. The Name of their Mosque is Baitut-Tauhīd.

In Italy the movement is registered as an association under the name of The Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at Italy with national headquarters in San Pietro in Casale (Bologna). The group has hundreds of people from different countries including Italy itself, but also Algeria, Morocco, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Ghana, Gambia, Tunisia, Togo and Somalia.

In recent years, various national information campaigns have been launched, such as the campaign "Muslims for Peace" and the campaign "Muslims for Loyalty." The community in Italy is known for the motto: Love for All Hatred for None. To learn about their activities, go to https://www.alislam.it.

From Royal Gazette, Bermuda

Community Launches True Islam Campaign SAM Strangeways

Members of a small Muslim movement in Bermuda have launched a campaign to raise awareness about the real meaning of Islam after terror attacks around the world. The Aḥmadiyya Muslim community says: The aim of its True Islam campaign is to clarify misconceptions about the religion and emphasize that it is vehemently opposed to violence. Spokeswoman Shabnam Jheengoor told The Royal Gazette: "We want to give a true perspective of what Islam is really about. Islam is a peaceful faith. People know that but with these things happening around the world, it tends to make people nervous and there are a lot of misunderstandings and we need to clear up those misunderstandings." There are only 616 Muslims in the Island and a handful Aḥmadīs, but look the blessings of Khilāfat, Coffee, Cake and True Islam Campaign is flourishing in the island through fliers and face book. For more information on the Aḥmadiyya community, visit its Facebook page AMC Bermuda or Twitter profile @AMC_Bermuda.93

As part of its centenary celebration, the Aḥmadiyya Movement in Islam, Nigeria launched a new book titled: "Aḥmadiyya Movement-In-Islam Nigeria, 1916-2016 A Manifestation of Dawah" on 13th of April, 2017 at the Muslim Community Hall, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos. The chief launcher of the book was the Vice Chairman of Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) and President Muslim Ummah of Southwest Nigeria (MUSWEN), Al-Haji Sakariyu Babalola, while the Chairman of the occasion was Chief Rabiu Oluwa.

Tablīgh event in Malta

The annual Peace Symposium titled: The Aḥmadiyya Muslim community of Malta, in collaboration with University of Malta's Student Council, organized "Jihad and Terrorism". The Symposium also featured Quran Exhibition. First Irish Imam Ibrahim Noonan who traveled all the way from Galway, Ireland also spoke at the event. He said: A true Muslim cannot be extremist or terrorist. My own teacher had told that just as fire and water cannot live together, so is it impossible for a true Muslim to be a terrorist. President of Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community Malta, Laiq Ahmed Atif, spoke about the word Jihad and how it is being misinterpreted by extremists to promote their ideology.

New prayer center at the Burton Branch UK

A Music Centre Converted to a Prayer Facility

A once-popular music venue could become a "mosque/community center" where meetings, prayers and religious ceremonies will be held, new plans have revealed.

The Burton branch of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Association UK hopes to hold meetings, prayers, and religious ceremonies at the Wetmore Whistle, in Wetmore Road, Burton.

News about Jamā'at Aḥmadiyya Croatia

On behalf of Humanity First Mr. Zubair Khan presented Croatian translation of Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam, Zikr-e-Ilahi, Absolute Justice, Kindness and Kinship and World Crises and Pathway to Peace to the President of Merhamet. Croatian translation of 10 speeches of Supreme Head of Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, comprising peace and justice, were also presented to the President as well to other members of the organization. In his remarks, President of Merhamet said: He finds Humanity First close to his heart as it is serving mankind, a noble cause that Merhamet also follows. He deeply thanked Humanity First for the generous donation and wished to have future cooperation. As a gesture of good memories he, on behalf of Merhamet, presented an appreciation certificate to Humanity First.

International news courtesy Respected Anwer M Khan

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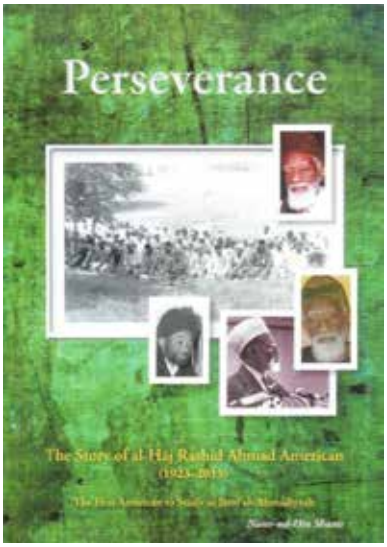


Having no place to stay, I would routinely show up at the Mosque for the daily Fajr prayers at 4:30 am. Quite frequently, my knocking on the door would earn me the blessings of waking up the others for prayers, and on the occasions that no one answered the door, I would offer my prayers on the Mosque porch alone.

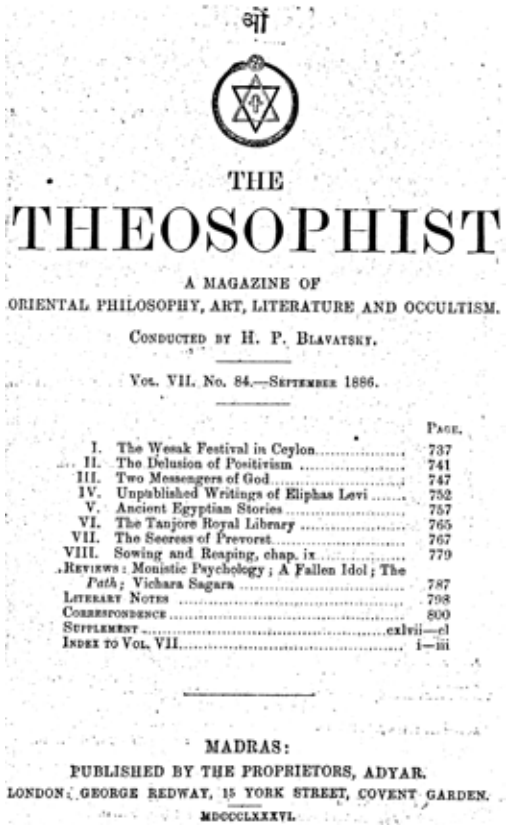
The story of Br Rashid. Now available from amibookstore.us. US $ 4.

Discovery of a letter of the Promised Messiah to an American colonel in the British Empire

By Tahir Ijaz, M.D, San Diego, CA USA

When the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) commenced his divine mission around 1882, he sent many letters to the scholarly community as well, announcing his claim and challenging them intellectually.

The author recently found a letter of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) sent to Henry Olcott (1832-1907) founding editor of the Theosophist, a periodical that discussed spirituality. The magazine was published in India and London, UK.



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THE

THEOSOPHIST

A MAGAZINE OF

ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY, ART, LITERATURE AND OCCULTISM.

CONDUCTED BY H. P. BLAVATSKY.

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		PAGE.
I.	The Wesak Festival in Ceylon	737
II.	The Delusion of Positivism	741
III.	Two Messengers of God	747
IV.	Unpublished Writings of Eliphas Levi	752
V.	Ancient Egyptian Stories	757
VI.	The Tanjore Royal Library	765
VII.	The Seeress of Prevorst	767
VIII.	Sowing and Reaping, chap. ix	779
REVIEWS:	Monistic Psychology; A Fallen Idol; The Path; Vichara Sagara	787
LITERARY NOTES		798
CORRESPONDENCE		800
SUPPLEMENT		cxlvii—cl
INDEX TO VOL. VII.		i—iii

MADRAS:

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MDCCCLXXXVI.

Olcott was an American military officer in the American Civil War and attorney and founder of the Theosophical Society. He was known to have investigated the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln.

He developed an interest in spirituality, particularly Buddhism, leading to the formation of the aforementioned society in 1875, based in New York City. He later moved the headquarters of the Society to India, to continue to educate Westerners on the Eastern religions.

The Theosophist was a respected magazine in British India and was widely read. In 1886 Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad issued his claim to Col. Olcott and this correspondence is preserved in the September issue of that year.

The letter is reproduced below. Comments follow the letter.

Henry Steel Olcott

Olcott was born on 2 August 1832 in Orange, New Jersey, the oldest of six children, to Presbyterian businessman Henry Wyckoff Olcott and Emily Steele Olcott. During his teens he attended first the College of the City of New York and later Columbia University.

He served in the US Army during the American Civil War and afterward was admitted as the Special Commissioner of the War Department in New York. He was later promoted to the rank of colonel and transferred to the Department of the Navy in Washington, DC. In 1865, following the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, assisted in the investigation of the assassination.

In 1868 he became a lawyer specializing in insurance, revenue, and fraud.

In 1874 he became aware of the séances of the Eddy Brothers of Chittenden, Vermont. His interest aroused, Olcott wrote an article for the New York Sun, in which he investigated Eddy Farms. His article was popular enough that other papers, such as the New York Daily Graphic, republished it. His 1874 publication, People from the Other World began with his early articles concerning the Spiritualist movement.

Olcott continued to act as a lawyer during the first

few years of the establishment of the Theosophical Society, in addition to being a financial supporter of the new religious movement.

In 1880 Helena Blavatsky and Olcott became the first Westerners to receive the refuges and precepts, the ceremony by which one traditionally becomes a Buddhist; thus Blavatsky was the first Western woman to do so.

In December 1878, they left New York in order to move the headquarters of the Society to India.

Olcott was President of the Theosophical Society until his death on February 17, 1907. Two major streets in Colombo and Galle have been named Olcott Mawatha, to commemorate him. A statue of him has been erected in front of Colombo Fort Railway Station. On September 10, 2011, a statue of Colonel Olcott was unveiled at a Buddhist temple near Princeton, New Jersey. Biography from Wikipedia)

Mirza Gulam Ahmad.

Of the history of the Mohammedan gentleman who has issued the following two documents, I have no personal knowledge. His invitation to me has not been accepted, notwithstanding his liberal offer to compensate me pecuniarily for devoting time to the investigation of his claims. Like the Hindu apostle, he offers to prove the divinity of his mission by the performance of miracles; and, unless doubts are entertained by others as well as myself as to his ability to redeem his spiritual promises, he should not lack guests and listeners. Among no body of sectarians are there more intensely zealous devotees of religion than among the Indian sons of Islam. They can boast among their *fakirs* and *pirs* men capable of producing the most astounding psychical phenomena. Though I myself have not seen their performances, I have personally met some whose disciples averred their possession of wonder-working powers, and trustworthy friends of mine have related to me very strange things they had witnessed with their own eyes. In the back numbers of this magazine several communications of the sort will be found. Besides the thaumaturgic fakirs and pirs, there are others who possess alchemical secrets, and mantrams for invoking djinns and other elemental spirits to perform phenomena. One of the most famous was Hassan Khan Djinni, a young man of impeachable morals, whose feats have been witnessed by hundreds still living. Whether Gulam Ahmad of Kadian, has these uncanny secrets or not, I cannot say. Possibly the publication of the following documents may elicit the facts of the case :—

I.

From Gulam Ahmad, *a humble servant of the Eternal God and a follower of the Chief Prophet* (*Muhammad*). To Col. Olcott, *Theosophical Society, Madras.*

Sir,

With all respect and humility I, (the Compiler of Burahin-i-Ahmadia), beg to say that the Almighty has commissioned me to try like the Nazarene Prophet (Christ) to amend the morals of mankind with utmost humility, lowliness, respect, submission and meekness, and to point out to the unacquainted the straight way by which we can obtain salvation, perceive the manifestations of heavenly life, and by which the marks of being loved by the Almighty become visible even in this physical world. For this purpose the book entitled "Burahin-i-Ahmadia," has been compiled, of which 592 pages have been printed and published, according to the synopsis of contents given in the accompanying notice. But as the publication of the *entire* book will take a long time, it has been determined, for the sake of conviction, to invite

the Dissenters by sending out this special epistle together with the enclosed notice to all the distinguished Clergy, and Jews of note throughout all the Continents of the world, as far as its transmission may be possible, and similarly to the Chief Leaders of Budhists, Brahmos, Aryas, Naturalists, Parsis, and the bigoted Maulawis* (who do not believe in the existence of miracles and unusual deeds, and are hence suspicious against me.)

This is not a device of my own speculative functions and conceptions, but it has been inspired in me by God, who has communicated as to His overwhelming, and convincing those who fail to attend to truth even after the receipt of this epistle.

Having this end in view, I take the liberty of addressing this letter to you as a respectable, eminent, and principal leader of your community, and trust that you will, as such, kindly, with pure spiritual views, endeavour to seek Him with zeal. If you fail to deign to this true mission you shall be held inexcusable before Him, and the accounts of your thus receiving a registered note and your inattention thereto shall be given in a detailed manner in Volume Vth of the said book.

The specific object, for which I am commissioned, is to convey to the general public that the *only* true religion *strictly in conformity to His will* is *Islam*, and the *revealed and uncorrupted word* which ought to be acted upon is *Alquran*, in which besides the rational reasons there *are heavenly signs* (exhibition of supernatural deeds), which an earnest seeker can observe with his own eyes by undertaking my association with patience. If you doubt the Islam's truth or the heavenly signs,† please, come over to Kadian as a *sincere truth seeker* and live with me, a humble creature, for a year to achieve this end, but the condition is that you should come with a *firm and true design* (a sincere characteristic of seeking the truth) *of embracing Islam or averring the fact of the existence of supernatural powers, then and there.* If you will come, binding yourself to the said stipulation and intention, you shall (D. V.) witness the heavenly signs, as the Almighty God has promised to exhibit them, and His promises are immutable and reliable.

Now, if you do not come you will yourself be answerable to God. After awaiting your arrival for three months, the statement of your indifference will, *ipso facto*, be noted in the book as stated above, but in case you do come, and fail to behold any heavenly signs during your stay with me for the time specified, you shall be paid Rs. 200 per mensem (besides food and accommodation, which will be supplied free to all) as compensation to cover your damages, or as a recovery of fine in default of my promise. If you deem this sum inadequate to your dignity, I am even ready to pay as damages or fine for unfulfilling promise, whatever suitable sum you propose yourself, proportionate to your rank, if it be but not beyond my means. It is, however, necessary that visitors desirous of recovering damages or fine should ask my permission before-hand, through a registered note, of their intent of coming over to me, to enable me to limit the number according to the availability of my estate, but it is not requisite to do if otherwise.

If you cannot condescend to come over in person, it is optional for you to depute a representative in whom you fully trust and whose observing the Divine manifestations you deem just, *as your own*, provided there should be no hesitation in your embracing Islam or admitting the veracity of unusual deeds. It is further requested that you should kindly enter into executing an agreement on a plain paper to the above terms of Conversion, having it attested by a few persons of good authority, of different persuasion and creed, which will be published in some English and Vernacular newspapers. You shall have the right to get your claim for Rs. 2,400 (or whatever you choose yourself to propose, and my means admit of it) registered or, in order to secure it further, to get a portion (proportionate to what is specially agreed upon) out of my property, formally registered in your name in Court.

Finally, I thank God that He has been pleased to display, through His infinite grace, the reasons and doctrines of this *true religion*, and has placed

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* Mahommedan Pandits.

† This refers to Naturalists and those Maulawis who though they believe in Islam, yet disbelieve in the existence of miracles and inspirations.

me for the spread of it under the protection of the liberal Government of British nation, to whom I am grateful through the sense of obligation and gratitude.

"Peace be to all the followers of righteousness."

With due respects,
I beg to remain,
Sir,
Your obedient well-wisher,
(Sd.) MIRZA GULAM AHMAD,
of Kadian, District Gurdaspur, Panjab, India,
ASIA.

II.

Being inspired and commanded by God, I have undertaken the compilation of a Book named "Burahin-i-Ahmadia," with the object of reforming and reviewing the religion, and have offered a reward of Rs. 10,000 to any one who would prove the arguments brought forward therein to be false. My object in this Book is to shew that the only true and the only revealed religion by means of which one might know God to be free from blemish, and obtain a strong conviction as to the perfection of His attributes, is the religion of Islam, in which the blessings of truth shine forth like the sun, and the impress of veracity is as vividly bright as the day-light. All other religions are so palpably and manifestly false that neither their principles can stand the test of reasoning nor their followers experience the least spiritual edification. On the contrary, those religions so obscure the mind and divest it of discernment, that signs of future misery among the followers become apparent even in this world.

That the Muhammadan religion is the only true religion, has been shown in this book in two ways: (1st), By means of 300 very strong and sound arguments based on mental reasoning (their cogency and sublimity being inferred from the fact that a reward of Rs. 10,000 has been offered by me to any one refuting them, and from my further readiness to have this offer registered for the satisfaction of any one who might ask for it): (2), From those Divine signs which are essential for the complete and satisfactory proof of a true religion. With a view to establish that Muhammadan religion is the only true religion in the world, I have adduced under this latter head three kinds of evidences: (1), The miracles performed by the Prophet during his lifetime, either by deeds or words, which were witnessed by people of other persuasions and are inserted in this book in a chronological order (based on the best kind of evidences): (2), The marks which are inseparably adherent in the Alquran itself, and are perpetual and everlasting, the nature of which has been fully expounded for comprehension: (3), The signs which by way of inheritances devolve on any believer in the Book of God and the follower of the true Prophet. As an illustration of this, I, the humble creature of God, by His help have clearly evinced myself to be possessed of such virtues by the achieving of many unusual and supernatural deeds, by foretelling future events and secrets, and by obtaining from God the objects of my prayers, to all of which many persons of different persuasions, like the Aryas, &c., have been eye-witnesses. (A full description of these will be found in the said book.)

I am also inspired that I am the Reformer of my time, and that as regards spiritual excellence, my virtures bear a very close similarity and strict analogy to those of Jesus Christ, and in the same way as the distinguished chief of prophets were assigned a higher rank than that of other prophets, I also by virtue of being a follower of the August Person (the benefactor of mankind, the best of the messengers of God,) am favored with a higher rank than that assigned to many of the Saints and Holy Personages perceeding me. To follow my footsteps will be a blessing and the means of salvation, whereas any antogonism to me will result in estrangement and disappointment. All these evidences will be found by perusal of the book, which will consist of nearly 4,800 pages, of which about 592 pages have been published. I am always ready to satisfy and convince any seeker of truth. *"All this is a Grace of God, He gives it to whomsoever He likes, and there is no bragging in this."* "Peace be to all the followers of righteousness!"

If after the publication of this notice any one does not take the trouble of becoming an earnest enquirer after the truth, and does not come forward with an unbiassed mind to seek it, then my challenging (discussion) with him ends here, and he shall be answerable to God.

Now I conclude this notice with the following prayer: *Oh Gracious God, guide the pliable hearts of all the nations, so that they may have faith on thy chosen Prophet (Muhammad), and on thy holy Alquran, and that they may follow the commandments contained therein, so that they may thus be benefited by the peace and the true happiness which are specially enjoyed by the true Muslims in both the worlds, and may obtain absolution and eternal life, which is not only procurable in the next world, but is also enjoyed by the truthful and honest people even in this world. Especially the English nation, who have not as yet availed themselves of the sunshine of truth, and whose civilized, prudent and merciful empire has, by obliging us by numerous acts of kindness and friendly treatments, exceedingly encouraged us to try our utmost for their welfare, so that their fair faces may shine with heavenly effulgence in the next world. We beseech God for their well being in this world and the next. Oh God guide them and help them with thy grace, and instil in their minds the love for thy religion, and attract them with thy power, so that they may have faith on thy Book and Prophet, and embrace thy religion in groups. Amen! Amen!*

"Praise be to God, the supporter of creation!"

(Signed) MIRZA GULAM AHMAD,
Chief of Kadian, District Gurdaspur, Punjab, India.

Whatever else may be thought of the Kadian Chief's pretensions, the fervor of his self-persuasion will scarcely be denied.

Here we have two self-styled apostles of God, with commissions to enlighten a darkened world with religious truth. A difference will be noted in the tone of the two proclamations. The Hindu preaches the unity of truth and the brotherhood of mankind, while the pious Moslem declares Islam the only true faith, Alqurān the only inspired revelation. It is not for a third party, to whom all religious beliefs, sincerely held, are equally objects of tolerance, to decide between the two apostles. Who knows but their disagreements are but imaginary, and that if their respective images of Truth were disrobed they would be found identical beneath the vesture? A most noble presentation of this idea is given by Sree Krishna to Arjuna: "I am the same to all mankind: there is not one who is worthy of my love or hatred. They who serve me with adoration, I am in them, and they in me. They also who serve other gods with a firm belief, in doing so, involuntarily worship even me. I am he who partaketh of all worship, and I am their reward." The opponents of Hindu religion stigmatize it as narrow and intolerant: but are not these words the very outbreathing of the spirit of tolerance, love and justice?

H. S. OLCOTT.

Comments

It is a remarkable letter, apparently Promised Messiah's first known English language letter published in a periodical. The periodical, as mentioned, has an American connection as the Theosophical Society was founded in USA by Col Olcott and edited by him. He makes a brief response to Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) at the end. The author is not certain this letter was in USA Jamā'at archive, but with its publication here, it is recorded.

ḤAJJ

Translated From Fiqh Aḥmadiyya by Dr. Lutf ur Rehman. Nashville, TN,

Importance, Philosophy and Regulations

Going to Mecca to visit the Kaʿba (also called the House of God) is known as Ḥajj. There are many conditions of this experience, which are outlined later. At this point, we wish to present the verses of the Holy Qur'ān where the history and regulations of Ḥajj are mentioned.

In the Holy Qur'ān Allāh explains the historical context and importance of Ḥajj:[1]

اِنَّ اَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُّضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِيْ بِبَكَّةَ مُبٰرَكًا وَّهُدًى لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۚ فِيْهِ اٰيٰتٌۢ بَيِّنٰتٌ مَّقَامُ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ ۚ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهٗ كَانَ اٰمِنًا ؕ

The first ever house that was built for the benefit of the mankind is the one in Mecca. This is a blessed spot and source for the righteous guidance. Many signs are manifest in it and this is where Ibrāhīm resided. He who enters it finds peace.

Mentioning the construction of the Kaʿaba once again by Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm (may peace be upon him), Qur'ān says:[2]

وَ اِذْ يَرْفَعُ اِبْرٰهٖمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَ اِسْمٰعِيْلُ ؕ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا ؕ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ۚ رَبَّنَا وَ اجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَاۤ اُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ ۠ وَ اَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَ تُبْ عَلَيْنَا ۚ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ ۚ رَبَّنَا وَ ابْعَثْ فِيْهِمْ رَسُوْلًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِكَ وَ يُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَ الْحِكْمَةَ وَ يُزَكِّيْهِمْ ؕ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ۚ

And recall when Ibrāhīm was laying the foundation of this house along with Ismāʿīl. Both were chanting, 'O our Lord! Accept this service by us. You are indeed the one who listen and have knowledge.

O our Lord we beseech you to accept us as your obedient servants, and make our progeny an obedient group. Show us the appropriate ways of worship and turn to us with blessings. Indeed, you look after your servants with mercy.

O our Lord raise among them a Prophet who would recite them your instructions and teach them the book and the wisdom and purify them. Indeed, you are the mighty and the wise.

وَ اِذْ بَوَّاْنَا لِاِبْرٰهِيْمَ مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ اَنْ لَّا تُشْرِكْ بِيْ شَيْـًٔا وَّ طَهِّرْ بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّآئِفِيْنَ وَ الْقَآئِمِيْنَ وَ الرُّكَّعِ السُّجُوْدِ ۚ

"And when we assigned to Ibrāhīm the site of the house and said, 'Associate not anything with me and keep my house clean for those who (come to) perform the circuits and those who stand (before me) and those who bend down (before me) and those who fall in prostration (before me).[3]

وَ اِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَ اَمْنًا ؕ وَ اتَّخِذُوْا مِنْ مَّقَامِ اِبْرٰهٖمَ مُصَلًّى ؕ وَ عَهِدْنَاۤ اِلٰۤى اِبْرٰهٖمَ وَ اِسْمٰعِيْلَ اَنْ طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّآئِفِيْنَ وَ الْعٰكِفِيْنَ وَ الرُّكَّعِ السُّجُوْدِ ۚ

And recall when we made this house (Kaʿbah) a place where people gather again and again and a peaceful spot. And I made the station of Ibrāhīm a place for Prayers. We had a covenant with Ibrāhīm and Ismāʿīl that they would keep my house clean and purified for those who perform the circuits (Ṭawāf) and those who remain there in for devotion (Iʿtikāf) and those who bow (Rukūʿ) and those who prostrate (Sajdah) in Prayers. [4]

وَ اِذْ قَالَ اِبْرٰهٖمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هٰذَا بَلَدًا اٰمِنًا وَّ ارْزُقْ اَهْلَهٗ مِنَ الثَّمَرٰتِ مَنْ اٰمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللّٰهِ وَ الْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ؕ قَالَ وَ مَنْ كَفَرَ فَاُمَتِّعُهٗ قَلِيْلًا ثُمَّ اَضْطَرُّهٗۤ اِلٰى عَذَابِ النَّارِ ؕ وَ بِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ۚ

And recall the time when Ibrāhīm asked his Lord to make this place a peaceful city and reward those who believe in God and the Last day. Upon this the Lord said, I will benefit for a short time even those who reject me. Then I will steer them to the punishment of Fire. Indeed, this is a bad end.[5]

وَ اَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَاْتُوْكَ رِجَالًا وَّ عَلٰى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَّاْتِيْنَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيْقٍ ۙ لِّيَشْهَدُوْا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ وَ يَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللّٰهِ فِيْۤ اَيَّامٍ

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[1] Holy Qur'ān, 3 [Āl 'Imrān] : 97, 98.
[2] Holy Qur'ān, 2 [Al-Baqarah] : 128-130
[3] Holy Qur'ān, 22 [Al-Ḥajj] : 27
[4] Holy Qur'ān, 2 [Al-Baqarah] : 126
[5] Holy Qur'ān, 2 [Al-Baqarah] : 127

مَّعْلُوْمٰتٍ عَلٰى مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِّنْۢ بَهِيْمَةِ الْاَنْعَامِ ۚ فَكُلُوْا مِنْهَا وَاَطْعِمُوا الْبَآئِسَ الْفَقِيْرَ ۝ ثُمَّ لْيَقْضُوْا تَفَثَهُمْ وَلْيُوْفُوْا نُذُوْرَهُمْ وَلْيَطَّوَّفُوْا بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيْقِ ۝

And proclaim unto mankind the Pilgrimage. They will come to you on foot, and on every lean camel, coming by every distant track. That they may witness its benefits for them and may mention the name of Allāh, during the appointed days over the cattle that he has provided for them. Then eat from them and feed the distressed and the needy. Then let them accomplish their needful acts of cleansing, and fulfill their vows, and go around the ancient House.[6]

وَلِلّٰهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ اِلَيْهِ سَبِيْلًا ؕ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَنِىٌّ عَنِ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝

"And Allāh has made it mandatory that people should perform Ḥajj of this house, whoever has the ability. Those who reject should know that Allāh is self-sufficient and not dependent on anyone."

Philosophy of Ḥajj

Ḥajj is a worship of a lover. A lover does everything for the happiness and approval of his beloved. He exhausts himself in this effort, walks around the house of his beloved, and loves everything connected to him. He does all this to gain the attention and affection of his beloved. The real beloved of a righteous person is God. To help him express his love and passion, some formal procedures have been included in the worship of Ḥajj. One covers himself with just two simple sheets, bare headed, wearing only slippers and his hair is not combed. Chanting لَبَّيْكَ لَبَّيْك (Here I am! At your service!) one goes to the House of God, kisses the black stone, and walks around the House of God. These are all expressions of his love and affection.

Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) points to this wisdom and says, "When in love, the soul of a person is constantly focused on his beloved and kisses his doorstep. In the same way, Ka'aba is given for the expression of the true lovers. God said, "This is my house and the black stone (Ḥajar al-Aswad) is my threshold." This was done to enable a person to physically express his love. Those who go for Ḥajj, physically walk around this place as if they are completely lost in the love of God. They abstain from personal grooming, have their heads shaved, and walk around this place just like an obsessed person. They kiss the black stone as if it was the stone of threshold of God's house. This physical passion creates spiritual love. The body is circling around his house and the soul circles around Him and kisses His spiritual doorstep. There is no Shirk (idolatry) in it. A passionate friend kisses even the letter from his beloved. No Muslim worships the Ka'aba nor does he beseech the black stone (Ḥajar al-Aswad). It is only a physical representation determined by God. When we prostrate on the floor it is not for the floor. Similarly, we kiss the black stone but it is not for the sake of this stone. It is just a stone which cannot benefit anyone. It is the hand of the beloved who has made it a representation of his threshold."[7]

Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm (may peace be upon him) laid the foundation of a hamlet in the wilderness just as God intended and settled his wife Ḥājar/Ḥājirah and son Ismā'īl. At that time there was no water nor did anyone go there. The purpose of this unprecedented sacrifice was that this place would become the center of universal guidance in the future. From the progeny of Ismā'īl (may peace be upon him) that great Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) will be born who is the reason for the existence of this universe. His teachings will be for the entire mankind for all times to come. In the absence of any obvious means, it did come to pass. God provided water in that area under extraordinary circumstances. Gradually this place was populated and it was called Bakkah or "Mecca." Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm identified the remains of this house of God from ancient times. He and his son together rebuilt this house and prayed to God for it to become the center of attention of the people.

This is the first house which was built for the worship of God. It is called, "Bait Allāh," "Bait al-'Aṭīq ," "Bait al-Ma'mūr," and "Ka'aba." The Muslims all around the world pray facing it. Hundreds of great signs from God were revealed in and around this house, this city and this area. Every inch of this place is witness to the fact that those who make sacrifices in the way of God never go to waste. To revive the memory of these sacred places and to gain confidence in the promises of God, Muslims were directed to visit them and witness for themselves the truth of God's promises.

Every nation and every community has a point of unity where people gather for the worship of God. They witness their culture and heritage. They are introduced to each other and come to appreciate each other's challenges and make a collective effort to resolve them.

[6] Holy Qur'ān, 22[Al-Ḥajj] : 28-30

[7] Chashma-i-Ma'rafat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in. Vol. 23. Page 100

It is said in the Holy Qur'ān,[8]

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا لِّيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللهِ

> We have made a place for every nation where people gather to worship God.

The worship of Ḥajj is a practical expression of this concept. Muslims gather on this occasion to praise their Lord and the Creator. They give thanks for His blessings and pray to Him for deliverance from adversity. They gain knowledge of Muslims living in other parts of the world. Cultural heritage is strengthened. It creates occasions for mutual consultations and united effort. Such and many other benefits are part of the philosophy of Ḥajj.

Locations of Ḥajj - Bait Allāh

Thousands of years ago, a place of worship was built in the wilderness upon instructions from God. It is not clear who was the builder but it is certain that this was the first building for the collective worship. God informs of this in the Holy Qur'ān,[9]

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُّضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِيْ بِبَكَّةَ

And again,[10]

جَعَلَ اللهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيٰمًا لِّلنَّاسِ وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ

For some time, people worshiped in this building but for obscure reasons, the place was deserted. The people who used to worship there went astray. However, God loved this place and he willed to bring this place back to life and make it a place of guidance for all people of the world and for all times to come. He selected a pious person for this task whose children have kept this light alive to this day.

This person was born in the house of idol worshippers in the city of Ur or Kadeem in Iraq. His family made their living by selling idols and their offerings. His father passed away while he was still a child. He was raised by one of his uncles. His uncle trained him in the family business along with his sons. The uncle was unaware that God had chosen this person and there was no place in his heart for the idols. On the very first day of business, a buyer who was old and rich came to buy idols. The cousins were happy that they will get good price for their idols. The old man chose a nice piece and was about to pay, when the young man noticed him. He asked, "You are old and close to the end of your life. What would you do with this idol?" He said, "I will take it home, put it in a clean place and worship it." The young man could not stop and said, "How old are you?" The old man told him of his age. The young man laughed in indignation and said, "You look so mature. My uncle made this statue just a few days ago. Would you not be ashamed prostrating before this idol?" The old man was disgusted and threw the statue on the ground and left. The cousins were upset seeing a prospective buyer leave like that. They informed their father who became enraged with his nephew.

This was the first hardship faced by this pure soul for the sake of God. He was young; however, punishment given to him did not discourage him. This punishment opened the door of reflection which led to a spiritual journey which culminated in Divine converse.

Eventually this child became famous in the world by the name of Ibrāhīm. He was appalled with the circumstances in his city and migrated to Palestine along with his wife Sāra where he settled for quite some time. The couple did not have a child for many years. Sāra then said to Ibrāhīm that they did not have a child, so he should marry the servant girl given to them by the king of Egypt. May be God will have mercy on them and bless them with a child. This pious woman was from the family of the king of Egypt. He gave her to Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm seeing his spirituality. The name of this girl was Ḥājar or Hagar or Ḥājirah. Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm accepted the plea of his wife and married Ḥājirah. In his old age, Abram was blessed with a son who was named Ismā'īl. God also changed the name of Abram to Abraham as he was promised Divine blessings. This Abraham is called Ibrāhīm in the Arabic language. Even as Sāra had consented for the second marriage of Ibrāhīm, she became jealous and started creating trouble for Ḥājirah. Ibrāhīm did not like this situation but he did not say anything considering the long companionship with his wife. He told his wife that Ḥājirah was her slave and she could deal with her as she wished. Lest did Ibrāhīm knew that this was the plan leading to another migration.

When Ismā'īl became a little older and was running alongside of his father, Ibrāhīm saw in a dream that he was sacrificing his son for the sake of God. Human sacrifice was common in those days and was considered a way to get God's blessings. Ibrāhīm was also thought that God wants to test him and he was ready to sacrifice his son.

Even though he was young and did not understand the religious intricacies, the son was spiritual and smart. He asked his father to fulfill his dream as he wished. Father placed a blindfold on the eyes of the son and was ready to sacrifice him. The dream, though, meant something different. God spoke to Ibrāhīm and informed him that the sacrifice of the child was not needed as this practice of human sacrifice is abrogated for all times to come. In future, sacrifice will be of life, honor, property and time in the way of God's religion. As an outward

[8] Holy Qur'ān, 22 [Al-Ḥajj] : 35
[9] Holy Qur'ān, 3 [Aali 'Imran] : 97
[10] Holy Qur'ān, 5 [Al-Mai'dah] : 98

expression, you shall sacrifice an animal on the tenth of Dhul-Ḥajj every year.

As a reward for these sacrifices Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm was given the glad tidings of increasing the progeny of this child and that people will gain blessings from him. Due to the Divine instruction and circumstances Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm left his wife Ḥājirah and his first son, Ismāʿīl at, at a place where the city of Mecca stands today. In older times, this was also called Bakkah. The purpose of this action was to be able to discover and rebuild the "Bait-ul-Aṭīq"[11] which had been lost centuries ago. According to the will of God, Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm and Ḥaḍrat Ismāʿīl together built the house which is now the center of the universe. It is known as Kaʾbah or "Bait Allāh." This is the building at the center of the sacred mosque. It usually has black silk cover on it. The present shape of Kaʿbah is a rectangle that is 44 feet long from north to south and 33 feet wide from east to west and 45 feet tall.

Ḥaṭīm

Towards the northern wall of Kaʿbah there is a semicircular space which has a low wall around it but no roof. It is narrated that before the birth of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when Quraish were rebuilding the Kaʿbah there was not enough wood to cover this area so they left it open. When making circuits of Kaʿbah this portion is included but if you pray only facing this area the Ṣalāt will not be valid. The drain from the roof of the Kaʿbah (Mīzāb-ur–Raḥmah) falls into this area.

Ḥajar al-Aswad (The Black Stone)

Close to the Southeastern corner of the Kaʿbah a black stone is present. This is called Ḥajar al-Aswad. This stone is considered sacred. This stone is probably a large meteor which fell on a hill, Abū Qabīs close to Mecca. At the time of building Kaʿbah Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm picked up this prominent stone from there and installed it in the corner of Kaʿbah. Anyone who performs a circuit of Kaʾbah is instructed to kiss this stone first. This stone is among the signs of Allāh and power and glory. One loves everything belonging to his beloved. This is the philosophy of kissing this stone. Otherwise, this is just a stone and cannot hurt or benefit anyone. Muslims do not consider this stone to have such capabilities at all.

Multazam

Northern wall between the Ḥajar al-Aswad and the door of Kaʿbah is called "Multazam" (place of clinging). Those performing Ḥajj rub their chest against this wall just like a hug, when they are coming back. This is an expression of love when leaving the house of God.

Rukn Al-Yamānī

Since the Southwestern corner of Kaʿbah faces Yemen, it is called "Rukn Al-Yamānī." While making circuits of Kaʿbah it is preferred to touch this portion with your hand or kiss it.

Maṭāf

There is a circle around Kaʿbah made out of marble stone. This is used to make circuits of Kaʿbah. Making circuits of Kaʿbah is a worship which is performed by seven circuits.

Spot of Ibrāhīm (Maqām Ibrāhīm)

In the front portion of the door of Kaʿbah and "Multazam" there is a small dome like structure. The stone which Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm used to stand upon and built the walls of Kaʿbah is placed in it. The spot where this stone is placed is called Maqām Ibrāhīm.

After performing seven circuits of Kaʿbah it is necessary to offer two Rakaʿāt Prayer. It is more rewarding if these Rakaʿāt are offered while standing in the spot called "Maqām Ibrāhīm." Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān,[12]

وَاتَّخِذُوْا مِنْ مَّقَامِ اِبْرٰهٖمَ مُصَلًّى

Make the spot of Ibrāhīm a place to offer Ṣalāt.

Zamzam

To the left of "Maqam Ibrāhīm" towards the east, there is a well which appeared when Ḥaḍrat Ismāʿīl was grinding his heals due to thirst. This well is a remembrance of those days and is called Zamzam. People drink the water of this well facing Kaʿbah to get blessings.

Masjid al-Ḥarām (*Sacred Mosque*)

Around the Kaʿbah there is a large and expansive mosque where people make circular rows around the Kaʿbah for Ṣalāt. the Holy Qur'ān calls this mosque as the "Sacred Mosque."[13]

لَتَدْخُلُنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ اِنْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ اٰمِنِيْنَ

The present area of this mosque is more than one hundred thousand square meters (one million square feet). Columns are made of stones with domes on top. This mosque was very different at the time of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and much smaller.

Ṣafā and Marwah

Close to the sacred mosque in Mecca towards the south there were two hills. Now they are more level and look like a yard. Going from the sacred mosque, first is the hill called "Aṣ-Ṣafā (الصفا)" and towards east from here is the second hill called

[11] Holy Qur'ān, 22[Al Ḥajj]:30

[12] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]:126

[13] Holy Qur'ān, 48[Al-Fatḥ]:28

"al-Marwah (المروة)." Ḥaḍrat Ḥājar/Ḥājirah ran between these hills seven times trying to find water. She went to Aṣ-Ṣafā and then ran to al-Marwah and then went back to Aṣ-Ṣafā again. Those performing Ḥajj and 'Umrah are required to go between Aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwah seven times in memory of this distress and to recount the blessings of God. This worship is called "Sa'y" (effort). Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān,[14]

اِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَآئِرِ اللّٰهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ اَوِ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ اَنْ يَّطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا

"Aṣ-Ṣafā and al-Marwah are indeed among the signs of Allāh. One who comes for Ḥajj or 'Umrah of this House, there is no sin if he walks briskly between them."

Locations Outside of Mecca - Mina

Three miles to the east of Mecca, there is a large open field. In this field are the three stones which are known as Jamarāt [place of pebbles] (جمرة) or Satan. These three stones are called; al-Jamrah al-'Ūlā (Al-Jamratul-'Ūlā), Al-Jamrah al-Wusṭā (Al-Jamratuw-Wustā) or Al-Jamratuth-Thāniya, and al-Jamrah al-Kubrā (al-Jamratul-Kubrā) or Al-Jamratuth-Thālithah or Jamaratul-'Aqabah. Upon returning from Muzdalifah, on the 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th of Dhul-Ḥajj, pebbles are hurled at these Jamarāt. This ritual is called "Ramy-ul-Jamarāt." Those performing Ḥajj come to Mina on the eighth of Dhul-Ḥajj. At this place, they offer Ẓuhr, Aṣr, Maghrib, and 'Ishā Prayers. The Fajr Ṣalāt of the ninth Dhul-Ḥajj is also offered at this place. In one portion of this field is a large slaughterhouse where hundreds of thousands of animals are sacrificed each year in remembrance of the sacrifice of Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm and Ḥaḍrat Ismā'īl.

Allāh, the Almighty, points to the historical significance of this sacrifice in the Holy Qur'ān:[15]

وَفَدَيْنٰهُ بِذِبْحٍ عَظِيْمٍ

And we paid for him with a great sacrifice

حَتّٰى يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحِلَّهٗ

Until the sacrifice reaches its place.

Here the word مَحِلَّ refers to place called "Mina."

'Arafāt

Towards north east of Mecca about nine miles away is the vast field where people gather on the ninth of Dhul-Ḥajj. This field is called 'Urfa or 'Arafāt. One has to stay here from Ẓuhr until sunset. This is called Wuqūf 'Urfah. Allāh the Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān:[17]

فَاِذَآ اَفَضْتُمْ مِّنْ عَرَفٰتٍ فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ

When you return from 'Arafāt remember Allāh when you get to al-Mash'ar al-Ḥarām.

ثُمَّ اَفِيْضُوْا مِنْ حَيْثُ اَفَاضَ النَّاسُ

Return from the spot from where the people have been returning

"Jabal ar-Raḥmah" is the name of another hill in this field.

Muzdalifah

There is an open field, about three miles away, when going from 'Arafāt towards Mina. A hill called Al-Mash'ar al-Ḥarām is located in this field. On their way, back from 'Arafāt, people spend night in this field and offer Maghrib and 'Ishā Prayers by combining them. The Fajr Prayer of 10th Dhul-Ḥajj is also offered at this place. After Fajr Prayer one should go to "Al-Mash'ar al-Ḥarām" and pray a lot. Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān,[19]

فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ

Remember Allāh around Al-Mash'ar al-Ḥarām.

Mawāqīt

Mawāqīt is the plural of Mīqāt. Mīqāt refers to a place where people coming for Ḥajj from all around the world wear Iḥrām. It is prohibited to go past these places without wearing Iḥrām. Iḥrām is a particular way of making intent for Ḥajj.

For different regions, there are different Mawāqīt. Detail of this is as follows:

Dhul-Ḥalīfah: About five miles from the city of Medina towards Mecca there is a village that is a Mīqāt for people coming from Medina or that direction. People wear Iḥrām at this place. To go past this without wearing proper Iḥrām is prohibited:

هُوَ مَوْضِعُ مَاءٍ لِبَنِيْ جَشَم

Juḥfah: About forty miles north of Mecca there is a place that is Mīqāt for those coming from Egypt, Syria, and from the West, that is, Northern Africa:

هِيَ قَرْيَةٌ بَيْنَ مَكَّه وَالْمَدِيْنَةِ يَقْرُبُ مِنْهَا الْقَرْيَةُ الْمَعْرُوْفَه بِرَابِغ

Dhātu 'Irq: About thirty miles from Mecca there is a village in the mountains which is Mīqāt for those coming from Iraq and the east:

هِيَ قَرْيَةٌ عَلٰى مَرْحَلَتَيْنِ مِنْ مَكَّة

Qarn-ul-Manāzil: About thirty or forty miles from Mecca towards the east there is a mountain. This is Mīqāt for those coming from Najd:

[14] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]: 159

[15] Holy Qur'ān, 37[Al-Saffat]:108

[16] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]: 197

[17] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]: 199

[18] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]: 200

[19] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]: 199

هُوَ جَبَلٌ مُشْرِفٌ عَلٰى عَرَفَات

Yalumlum: This is a rock in the sea about thirty miles south of Mecca. This is Mīqāt for those who are travelling from the direction of Yemen. This is also Mīqāt for those travelling from Pakistan on a ship:

هُوَ جَبَلٌ مِنْ جِبَالِ تهامه

Those who live within these places closer to Mecca, their houses are Mīqāt for them. They should wear Iḥrām from their houses.

One who intends to go for Ḥajj can start his journey by wearing Iḥrām right from his home. Those living in Mecca wear Iḥrām from their homes. It is not necessary to go to a Mīqāt and wear Iḥrām.

Tan'īm: هُوَمَكَانَ يُسَمَّى بِمَسَاجِدِعَائشه It is a place close to Mecca. For those who live in Mecca, they can travel to this place outside the city, wear Iḥrām and then enter the city of Mecca. In one sense, they would then be travelling for Ḥajj or Umrah. Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said,[20]

اِنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اَمَرَ عَبْدَالرَّحْمٰنِ بْنِ اَبِيْ بَكْرٍ اَنْ يُعَمِّرَ عَائِشَةَ مِنَ التَّنْعِيْمِ

A part of the worship of Ḥajj and Umrah is to travel in the way of God and get out of your city.

Ḥaram

Mecca and area around it is called Ḥaram. The boundaries of this are different in different directions. From one side, it is about three miles from the city and on the other side seven miles. In the third direction towards Jiddah the boundary is nine miles.

The boundaries are as follows:

1. Towards north, it is six kilometers up to "Tan'īm."
2. Towards south it is 12 kilometers up to "Aḍā'."
3. Towards east it is 16 kilometers up to "Ji'rānah/Ji'irrānah."
4. Towards west it is 15 kilometers up to Shamīsī.
5. Towards the north east it is 14 kilometers up to the valley of Nakhlah.

Within these limits, it is prohibited to hunt or bother a wild animal. It is also prohibited to cut down a tree or even wild grass. However, a dangerous animal such as a wild beast, snake, spider, or other harmful animals such as mouse, crow, and other birds that can harm the crops can be killed. A mad dog can also be killed. A particular type of grass called Idhkhir can be cut down. Crops can be harvested too.

The Time of Ḥajj

Three months are designated as اَشْهُرُ الحج meaning these are the months of Ḥajj. Allāh the Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān:[21]

اَلْحَجُّ اَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُوْمٰتٌ ۚ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيْهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوْقَ ۙ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ

> The months of Ḥajj are known to everyone. One who makes a firm intent to perform Ḥajj (he should know) in the days of Ḥajj there is no sexual passion, disobedience, or quarrel.

These three months are Shawwal, Dhul-Qa'dah, and Dhul-Ḥajj. These are called the months of Ḥajj as preparation starts with improving the conduct and learning about the other aspect of Ḥajj. The final formal procedures of Ḥajj must be completed by the 13th of Dhul Ḥajj. However, "Ṭawāf Ifāḍah" which is also called "Ṭawāf Ziyarah" can be done at any time from the 10th to the last day of the month of Dhul-Ḥajj.

When is Ḥajj mandated?

Ḥajj is mandated upon an adult Muslim of sane mind who has enough provisions for the travel and his household, is healthy, able to travel, there is peace, and nothing stands in the way.

وَتَزَوَّدُوْا فَاِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوٰي [22]

Elements of Ḥajj

There are three basic elements of Ḥajj.

1) Iḥrām - meaning intent.
2) "Wuqūf 'Urfah" meaning to stay in the field of 'Arafāt on ninth Dhul-Ḥajj.
3) "Ṭawāf Ziyārat" which is also called "Tawāf Ifāḍah" meaning the Ṭawāf which is performed after "Wuqūf 'Urfah" from the 10th of Dhul-Ḥajj or afterwards.

If one is unable to reach the place of 'Arafāt on the ninth of Dhul-Ḥajj even for a short time, his Ḥajj will not be proper. He will have to perform the Ḥajj again.

The Method of Performing Ḥajj

When a person has the means, is healthy and can travel and there is peace Ḥajj is mandated upon him. When he leaves for Ḥajj he should part with his family and relatives cheerfully. He should make provisions for his family until his expected return.

Iḥrām

Once one reaches Mīqāt, one should do Wuḍū, or take a shower, use perfume, and cover oneself with two un-stitched sheets, one as pants and the other to cover the body. Head should be bare. This is the regulation for the men. Women can do Ḥajj in their own clothes. She should keep her face uncovered.

Everyone (men or women) should offer two Raka'āt Nafl. Then making the intent for Ḥajj one should say the following words:

[20] Tirmidhī, Kitāb al-Ḥajj

[21] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]:198

[22] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]:198

لَبَّيْكَ اَللّٰهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ۔ لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ اِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ لَكَ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَكَ۔

I am here my Lord, I am here. I am in Your presence. There is none like You. I am in Your presence. All praise and good belongs to You. Yours is the kingdom and there is none like You.

These words in Arabic are called Talbiyah. It is an essential part of Iḥrām. If these words are not said, with the intention to perform Ḥajj, the Iḥrām will not be complete. The Talbīh has the same significance for Ḥajj as Takbīr Taḥrīmah has for the Ṣalāt.

After Talbiyah, one is "Mahram" and ready to perform Ḥajj. A Mahram has to abstain from many things that are permitted under normal circumstances. These include hunting, asking someone else to hunt for him, using perfume, combing hair, having a haircut, cutting the nails, for a man to cover his head, face, wearing a cap, head cover of any type, using socks, wearing full shoes, or having intercourse with wife or anything leading to it such as kissing are all prohibited. Things that are part of normal comfortable life are not permitted.

While in Iḥrām it is unscrupulous to be involved in deceit, treachery, war, or fighting. These are not expected from a Muslim even under ordinary circumstances much less in this condition. Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān,[23]

فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيْهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوْقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ

One among you who intends to do Ḥajj (he should know) there is no passion, disobedience, or quarrel.

After Iḥrām one should recite "Talbīh" repeatedly, walking, standing, or sitting. One should constantly focus on Durūd, remembrance of God, and Istighfār. He should pray to God fervently for the success of his righteous mission. This is a special time for the acceptance of prayers.[24]

Once he enters Mecca, after securing his luggage, he should do Wuḍū or take a shower and go straight to the sacred mosque. While saying Takabir and Talbiyah, he should stand before the Ḥajar al-Aswad and place his hands on the wall of Ka'bah just like in Sajdah and kiss the sacred stone. If he is unable to kiss it, he should try to touch it with his hand. If that is not possible, then he should just point to it with his hand or stick and make a gesture of kissing. He should not push or shove to get to the sacred stone. Kissing the Ḥajar al-Aswad is called Istilām. After Istilām one should start walking to the right where the door is and complete seven circuits of Ka'bah.

Ḥaṭīm is also part of Ka'bah. One should pass outside of this. In the first three circuits, it is Sunnah to walk briskly displaying pride with the shoulders flapping.[25] In every circuit when he reaches before Ḥajar al-Aswad, he should do Istilām. It is also desirable to do Istilām of "al-Rukn al-Yamānī." The seventh circuit should end at Ḥajar al-Aswad. Then he should come to Maqam Ibrāhīm and offer two Raka'āt. After arriving in Mecca these are the first circuits, which are called "Ṭawāf-ul-Qudūm." After making these circuits, he should come to the hill of Aṣ-Ṣafā and facing Ka'bah, raise his hands and pray to God, recite Durūd, say Takābīr and Talbiyah. Then he should walk to the other hill, Marwah and reaching there should pray similarly. This will complete his first circuit. He should then go back to Aṣ-Ṣafā and this would be his second circuit. His seventh and last circuit will finish at Marwah. These seven circuits are called "Sa'y."[26]

After this "Sa'y" between Aṣ-Ṣafā and Marwah he is free. He can go back to where he was staying or roam around. On the eighth of Dhul Ḥajj he will go to Mina. There he will stay and offer Ẓuhr, Aṣr, Maghrib, and 'Ishā Prayers. On the ninth after Fajr Prayer, he should proceed to 'Arafāt. He should stay at 'Arafāt from Ẓuhr until Maghrib. He should offer Ẓuhr and Aṣr Prayers by combining them. On the ninth of Dhul-Ḥajj, stay at 'Arafāt is one of the most important elements of the Ḥajj. If for some reason, it is missed, the Ḥajj will not be proper.

Except the valley of 'Urfah which is to one side of the "'Arafāt," the rest of the open field is acceptable for the regulations. After Ẓuhr and Aṣr, one should continue the Tasbīḥ, Istighfār, and prayers. After sunset, he should walk from 'Arafāt to Muzdalifah. Except the valley, the rest of the field of Muzdalifah is acceptable for regulations. At the time of 'Ishā, he should offer Maghrib and 'Ishā Prayers together by combining them. Fajr Ṣalāt should be offered early in the morning. Then he should go to Mash'ar al-Ḥarām and Pray there. He should concentrate on Takābīr and Talbiyah. Once the day light appears, he should walk back to Mina. He should pick up seventy pebbles on the way. Once in Mina he should first throw seven pebbles and hit the rock called "Jumrat-ul-'Aqabah." This ritual is called "Rami." After throwing the first pebble it will not be necessary to recite Talbiyah anymore. If he is

[23] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]: 198

[24] Nail al-Auṭār

[25] Tirmidhī, Kitāb al-Ḥajj

[26] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]: 159

offering animal sacrifice, he should go to the slaughter house and do so,[27] or he can end his Iḥrām by shaving the head. For women cutting of only a few hair is sufficient. It is not proper for her to shave her head. This is the 10th day of Dhul-Ḥajj. There is no ʻĪd Prayers for those performing the Ḥajj. After ending the Iḥrām he should come to Mecca on this day and make circuits of Ka'bah. This is a fundamental element of Ḥajj and is called "Ṭawāf Ziyārat." After this all prohibitions associated with Iḥrām end.

After "Ṭawāf Ziyārat" he should return to Mina and stay there for three days. There are three Jamrah in Mina, al-Jamrah al-'Ūlā, al-Jamrah al-Wusṭā, and al-Jamrah al-Kubrā. These are three small rocks which are a representation of Satan.

On the 11th of Dhul-Ḥajj, he should throw pebbles on these rocks. First, he should hit the Jamrah close to "Masjid Khaif" with seven pebbles, then the next which is called al-Jamrah al-Wusṭā and then the last one called al-Jamrah al-Kubrā. He should hit them with seven pebbles each. On the 12th of Dhul-Ḥajj, he should hit these Jamrah once again just like the day before. It is optional to stay at Mina on the 13th of Dhul-Ḥajj and do the Ramy(un) again or leave.[28]

فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِيْ يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَآ اِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ

If one is in a hurry and returns in just two days, it is not a sin.

He should return to Mecca either on the 12th or 13th of Dhul-Ḥajj and perform the circuits of Kaʻbah again. This is called Ṭawāf-uṣ-Ṣadr or Ṭawāf al-Wadāʻ. This Ṭawāf is for those who do not live in Mecca and wish to return home. After this Ṭawāf, he should drink from Zamzam, kiss the threshold of Kaʻbah, and pray fervently by pressing his chest against the "Multazam." He should pray to God by holding the cover of the Ka'bah and ask for forgiveness of his sins. Then he should look at the Ka'bah one last time and return home.

Umrah (عمرة)

Making circuits of Kaʻaba (Ṭawāf) and walking between Ṣafā and Marwah (Saʻy) is called Umrah. Iḥrām should be made outside of Mecca. Those living in Mecca go to Tanʻīm for Iḥrām and then come back to Mecca. In a way, this fulfils the requirement of travel for Umrah. There is no set time for Umrah. It can be performed at any time during the year. However, Umrah cannot be done from the ninth to the thirteenth of Dhul-Ḥajj as these are the days of Ḥajj.

The method of concluding the Iḥrām is same as for Ḥajj. A man should have his head shaved but a woman has to cut just a few hair.

Types of Ḥajj

There are three types of Ḥajj.

1) **Ḥajj Al-Ifrad:** This is the Ḥajj which has been described above.
2) **Ḥajj Al-Tamattu:** Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān,[29]

فَمَنْ تَمَتَّعَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ اِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلٰثَةِ اَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ اِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ؕ تِلْكَ عَشَرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ؕ ذٰلِكَ لِمَنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ اَهْلُهٗ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ

In the days of peace, one who wishes to go for Ḥajj after Umrah, he should do the animal sacrifice that he can easily afford. One who cannot afford animal sacrifice should fast for three days during the Ḥajj and seven days after he returns home. This would make it ten. This regulation is for those whose family does not live close to Masjid al-Ḥarām.

This verse mentions Ḥajj Al-Tamattu. The detail is as follows: In the months of Ḥajj one should make Iḥrām for only performing the Umrah. After Umrah he should end his Iḥrām. Then on the eighth of Dhul-Ḥajj or before that make Iḥrām for Ḥajj and perform Ḥajj according to the prescribed method. Doing Umrah in the months of Ḥajj and then with a new Iḥrām performing Ḥajj is called Ḥajj Al-Tamattuʻ.

Tamattu means getting benefit. In this circumstance, one does both Umrah and Ḥajj with just one journey. It is not necessary for a person to sacrifice animal if he is performing Ḥajj Al-Ifrad on the 10th of Dhul-Ḥajj. However, for Ḥajj Al-Tamattu it is necessary. This sacrifice is called Dam Al-Tamattuʻ. If he cannot offer animal sacrifice then he will have to fast for ten days. Three of these fasts have to be in the days of Ḥajj on the seventh, eighth, and ninth of Dhul-Ḥajj. He can complete the rest of the seven once he gets back home.

3) **Ḥajj Al-Qirān:** One makes Iḥrām for both Ḥajj and Umrah at the same time and say:[30]

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اُرِيْدُ الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ فَيَسِّرْهُمَا لِيْ ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِيْ فِيْهِمَا

Once he arrives in Mecca, he will do Umrah first. He would not end his Iḥrām. He would then perform all the formal procedure of Ḥajj. On the 10th of Dhul-Ḥajj he will end the Iḥrām for both Ḥajj and Umrah. Just like in Ḥajj Al-Tamattu animal sacrifice is necessary for this too. If he cannot offer animal sacrifice then he will have to fast for ten days in the same manner.

Janāyat Ḥajj (Omissions and Mistakes)

[27] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]: 197
[28] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]:204
[29] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]:197
[30] Hidaya, Bab al-Qur'ān

"Janayāt" means omission or mistake. There are exact regulations of Ḥajj and anyone who does not perform them accurately is liable. The detail of these mistakes are found in the books of Aḥadīth and Fiqh. Some are mentioned below:

1) A person who wears regular clothes without cause during Iḥrām or has his head shaved due to lice in his head is liable. He will have to pay Fidya.

Fidya means fasting or feeding the poor or sacrificing an animal.

فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيْضًا اَوْ بِهٖۤ اَذًى مِّنْ رَّاْسِهٖ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِّنْ صِيَامٍ اَوْ صَدَقَةٍ اَوْ نُسُكٍ[31]

Concept of Fidya is same as Sajdah Sahw for making up of mistakes in Ṣalāt.[32]

رَوِىَ عَنْ ابن عباسٍؓ اَنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ قَالَ اذا لم يَجِدْ ازَارًا فَلْيَلْبِسِ السَّرَاوِيْلَ وَاِذَا لَمْ يَجِدِ النَّعْلَيْنِ فَلْيَلْبِسِ خُفَّيْنِ و ليقطعها اسفل مِن الْكَعْبَيْنِ-

2) If he hunts while in Iḥrām, he will have to sacrifice a similar animal. For example, if he kills a deer he will have to sacrifice a sheep or lamb in the slaughter house of Mina. If he has killed an ostrich then he should sacrifice a camel. If he is not able to sacrifice an animal then he should feed six poor individuals. If he is unable to do that then he should fast for three days.

In case of doubt two experts can be used to determine the value of an animals. Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān;

عَبْدَ اللّٰهِ بْنَ مَعْقِلٍ قَالَ قَعَدْتُ إِلَى كَعْبِ بْنِ عُجْرَةَ فِي هَذَا الْمَسْجِدِ يَعْنِي مَسْجِدَ الْكُوفَةِ فَسَأَلْتُهُ عَنْ فِدْيَةٌ مِنْ صِيَامٍ فَقَالَ حُمِلْتُ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَالْقَمْلُ يَتَنَاثَرُ عَلَى وَجْهِي فَقَالَ مَا كُنْتُ أُرَي أَنَّ الْجَهْدَ قَدْ بَلَغَ بِكَ هَذَا أَمَا تَجِدُ شَاةً قُلْتُ لَا قَالَ صُمْ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ أَوْ أَطْعِمْ سِتَّةَ مَسَاكِينَ لِكُلِّ مِسْكِينٍ نِصْفُ صَاعٍ مِنْ طَعَامٍ وَاحْلِقْ رَأْسَكَ فَنَزَلَتْ فِيَّ خَاصَّةً

(بخارى كتاب التفسير باب قوله فمن كان منكم مريضًا او به اذى من راسه)

3) While in Iḥrām but before he arrives at the Ka'bah, if he had intercourse with his wife, then his Ḥajj will be spoiled. He will have to come for Ḥajj the next year. He will still have to do the remaining elements and rituals of the Ḥajj but it will not count. As a penalty, he will have to sacrifice a camel in the slaughterhouse of Mina.

Iḥṣār (Obstruction)

After making Iḥrām for Ḥajj or Iḥṣār

In case it becomes impossible to proceed to Mecca and perform the formal procedure of Ḥajj or Umrah such as severe illness, such a person should sacrifice the animal and then end his Iḥrām. Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān: [33]

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ وَاَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ ؕ وَمَنْ قَتَلَهٗ مِنْكُمْ مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَآءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعَمِ يَحْكُمُ بِهٖ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنْكُمْ هَدْيًۢا بٰلِغَ الْكَعْبَةِ اَوْ كَفَّارَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسٰكِيْنَ اَوْ عَدْلُ ذٰلِكَ صِيَامًا لِّيَذُوْقَ وَبَالَ اَمْرِهٖ ؕ عَفَا اللّٰهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ ؕ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَيَنْتَقِمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْهُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ۝

اُحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهٗ مَتَاعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِلسَّيَّارَةِ ۚ وَحُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَرِّ مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرُمًا ؕ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْۤ اِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُوْنَ ۝

جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيٰمًا لِّلنَّاسِ وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَالْهَدْيَ وَالْقَلَآئِدَ ؕ ذٰلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوْۤا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۙ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ۝

اِعْلَمُوْۤا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ۝

O ye who believe! kill not game while you are in a state of pilgrimage. And whoso amongst you kills it intentionally, its compensation is a quadruped like unto that which he has killed, as determined by two just men from among you, the same to be brought as an offering to the Ka'bah; or as an expiation he shall have to feed a number of poor persons, or fast an equivalent number of days, so that he may taste the penalty of his deed. As for the past, Allah forgives it; but whoso reverts to it, Allah will punish him for his offence. And Allah is Mighty, Lord of retribution.

The game of the sea and the eating thereof have been made lawful for you as a provision for you and the travelers; but forbidden to you is the game of the land as long as you are in a state of pilgrimage. And fear Allah to Whom you shall be gathered.

Allah has made the Ka'bah, the inviolable House, as a means of support and uplift for mankind, as also the Sacred Month and the offerings and the animals with collars. That is so that you may know that Allah knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth, and that Allah knows all things well.

Know that Allah is severe in punishment and that Allah is also Most Forgiving, Merciful.

If you are unable to perform Ḥajj or Umrah for some reason, sacrifice an animal and until it reaches its destination, do not shave your heads.

Miscellaneous Issues

While in Mecca one should make as many circuits of Ka'bah as he can and spend as much time in

[31] Holy Qur'ān, 2[Al-Baqarah]: 197

[32] Abū Dāwūd, Kitāb al-Ḥajj

[33] Holy Qur'ān, 5[Al-Ma'idah]:96-99

worship as possible. He should remember God and recite the Holy Qur'ān. He should try to visit the cave of Hira which is about three miles from Mecca high up in the mountain. Before his ministry, the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to go there for worship. He received his first revelation in this cave.

If possible, he should also go to visit the cave of Thaur. While migrating from Mecca to Medina, the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) escaped in this cave and stayed here for three days. This cave is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān.[34]

عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ وَإِنَّكَ حَرَّمْتَ مَكَّةَ عَلَى لِسَانِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ اللَّهُمَّ وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ وَإِنِّي أُحَرِّمُ مَا بَيْنَ لَابَتَيْهَا

(ابن ماجه كتاب المناسك باب فضل المدينه)

While both of them were in the cave, he was saying to his companion, do not worry, most certainly God is with us.

Medina

There are many signs of God in Medina. As Mecca and some area around it is sacred, similarly Medina and some surrounding area is sacred (twelve miles from Abr to Thaur):

اللّٰهم ان ابراهيم حرّم مكة وانى احرم ما بين لابتيها۔ (مشكوٰة)[35]

Mosque of the Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) (Masjid Nabawī) is in Medina, the mausoleum of the Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and "Maqbaratul-Baqī' (a grave yard containing the graves of many early Muslims). One should visit these sacred places. To offer forty Farḍ Ṣalāt in Al-Masjid an-Nabawī (Arabic: المسجد النبوي) is source for special rewards.[36] To stand before the grave of the Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and recite Durūd and pray for the universal blessing of the Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) produces a special spiritual serenity.

Pronouncements

Question: During Ḥajj what is the philosophy of hitting the Satan with the stones?

Answer: Most practices of Ḥajj are expressive and this is the case with this practice too. This is an expression of one's repulsion from all that is evil. Another example of expressive procedure is in the Ṣalāt. We raise the index finger while saying لَا إِلَهَ and bring it down while saying إِلَّا اللّٰهُ. In a Ḥadīth it is mentioned that this is more effective in repelling satanic ideas than a sharp spear. Hitting the Satan with stones is an expression of our repulsion for him. Similarly raising of hands while saying Takbīr at the beginning of Ṣalāt is a similar expression.

Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) says, "There are two parts to worship. First, a person should fear God as he should and secondly, is to love God as he should.

These are two rights which God demands from us. Islām has fulfilled these two rights by placing the aspect of God fearing in Ṣalāt. For the expression of love there is Ḥajj. Ḥajj has all the elements of love. Sometimes in extreme love, one does not care for his clothes and appearance. Love is a passion. One does not care for clothes in this passion. This expression of love is present in Ḥajj. The head is shaved. One runs. There is kissing which has been present in all divine laws. Then there is passion in the sacrifice of animals. Islām has taught these rights to the fullest. One who questions is ignorant of his own blindness.[37]

Ḥajj al-Badal

The family of a deceased Aḥmadī wrote to Huzoor that he had a firm intention to go for Ḥajj but death did not let him go. Is it permitted that to send someone in his place by giving him the expenses?

Huzoor said, "Yes, it is permitted. The deceased will get the reward."[38]

Question: Is it necessary for Ḥajj al-Badal that only he can go for it who has already done his own Ḥajj?

Answer: The basis of Ḥajj al-Badal is found in many different Aḥadīth. The more authentic narrations do not mention this condition, that the person who goes for Ḥajj –al-Badal should have done his own Ḥajj. These Aḥadīth are mentioned in Bukhārī, Muslim, and other six authentic books. One of them is as follows,[39]

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ اَنَّ امْرَأَةً مِنْ خَثْعَمَ قَالَتْ يَا رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ اِنَّ اَبِيْ اَدْرَكَتْهُ فَرِيْضَةُ اللّٰهِ فِي الْحَجِّ شَيْخًا كَبِيْرًا لَا يَسْتَطِيْعُ اَنْ يَّسْتَوِيَ عَلٰى ظَهْرِ بَعِيْرٍ قَالَ فَحُجِّيْ عَنْهُ

Ḥajj was mandatory for my father but he is so old that he cannot ride a camel sitting straight up. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

[34] Holy Qur'ān, 9[Al-Taubah]:40
[35] Mishkāt, Page 240
[36] Musnad Ahmad. Ch 3 Page 155
[37] Malfuẓāt. Vol 3, Page 299
[38] Malfuẓāt Vol 9, Page 279
[39] Bukhārī and Muslim

said, "You should do the Ḥajj on his behalf."

Among the scholars, Imām Thauri, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and his followers are of the view based upon these narrations that it is not a condition that one should have done his own Ḥajj before going for Ḥajj al-Badal. It is written:[40]

اَمَّا الْمُرَاهِقُ فَاِنَّهٗ يَصِحُّ اَنْ يَحُجَّ عَنِ الْغَيْرِ كَمَا يَصِحُّ حَجُّ الْمَرْاَةِ وَالْعَبْدِ عَنْ غَيْرِ هِمَا وَ كَذَا مَنْ لَّمْ يُؤَدِّ فَرِيْضَةَ الْحَجِّ عَنْ نَّفْسِهٖ

Followers of Ḥanafī school believe that a mature young man can go for Ḥajj al-Badal. Similarly, a woman and a slave can also do it. Also anyone can do it who has not done his own Ḥajj.

In contrast to this, other books of less authenticity such as Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah, Baihiqi and Ibn Jaban, etc. contain a narration from which some have concluded that it is necessary for a person who goes for Ḥajj al-Badal to have done his own Ḥajj. The narration is as follows:[41]

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ اَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَمِعَ رَجُلًا يَّقُوْلُ لَبَّيْكَ عَنْ شِبْرَمَةَ قَالَ مَنْ شِبْرَمَةُ قَالَ اَخٌ لِّيْ اَوْ قَرِيْبٌ لِيْ قَالَ حَجَجْتَ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ قَالَ لَا قَالَ حَجِّ عَنْ نَفْسِكَ ثُمَّ حَجِّ عَنْ شِبْرَمَةَ-

Ibn 'Abbās relates that the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) heard a person saying Talbiyah while making Iḥrām for a Ḥajj al-Badal from Shibramah. He asked, "Who is Shibramah?" He said, my brother or a relative. He asked, "Have you done Ḥajj for yourself?" He said, "No." The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "Do your own Ḥajj first and then for Shibramah."

The following has been said about this Ḥadīth. In a different narration of the same Ḥadīth, the following words are used, فَاجْعَلْ هٰذِهٖ عَنْ نَفْسِكَ ثُمَّ احْجُجْ عَنْ شِبْرَمَةَ instead of هٰذِهٖ عَنْ شِبْرَمَةَ وَحَجِّ عَنْ نَفْسِكَ. This creates doubt and it cannot be accepted against the more authentic narrations which do not have any such condition.

The purpose of Ḥajj Badal that more people should go for the sacred land and the poor can also do it is not in need of such conditions.

Question: Can an old woman of more than sixty years of age go for Ḥajj with a non-Mahram?

Answer: The old woman can go for Ḥajj with other women who are accompanied by their Mahrams. If there are only men in the group and no women then she cannot go. Many unforeseen events can happen such as illness and death. Only women can help in some circumstances. It is permitted to go with other women but not with only men.

Question: A person left home with the intent of Ḥajj but dies on the way. Should someone else do Ḥajj on his behalf?

Answer: The validity of Ḥajj is based upon intent and effort. If one took practical steps to fulfill his desire of Ḥajj but could not do so because of death, his Ḥajj has occurred before God. He received his reward. Death was not in his control. It was an act of God. So there is no reason of not receiving his reward. Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān,[42]

مَنْ يَّخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهٖ مُهَاجِرًا اِلَى اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ اَجْرُهٗ عَلَى اللّٰهِ

One who left home for the sake of God but death overtook him Allāh will surely reward him for his intention and his actions. His reward is with God.

The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said,[43]

مَنْ خَرَجَ حَاجًّا اَوْ مُعْتَمِرًا اَوْ غَازِيًا ثُمَّ مَاتَ فِيْ طَرِيْقِهٖ كَتَبَ اللّٰهُ لَهٗ اَجْرَ الْغَازِيْ وَالْحَاجِّ وَالْمُعْتَمِرِ

A person who embarks upon Ḥajj, Umrah or Jihad and then dies on the way, Allāh will reward him according to his intent and actions.

As for someone else to perform Ḥajj in his place, it is permitted and source for reward but not necessary. The scholars of Ḥanafī school believe,[44]

لَا يَجِبُ الْاِحْجَاجُ عَنْهُ بِدُوْنِ الْوَصِيَّةِ

In the absence of specific instructions left by the deceased it is not necessary for the survivors to perform Ḥajj on his behalf. However, if left a will in this matter and the expense of this task can be paid by not more than one-third of his estate, then it is necessary for the survivors to send someone for Ḥajj on his behalf.

Question: Can a Muslim perform Ḥajj on behalf of a non-Muslim?

Answer: There are certain requirements for Islāmic worships of Ṣalāt, fasting, and Ḥajj. For example, financial ability is necessary for Ḥajj. If someone does not have the means, Ḥajj is not mandatory for him. It is meaningless for that person to do Ḥajj. As for Nafli (voluntary) Ḥajj, it is a separate issue. It has no connection with this matter. One gets the opportunity to visit the signs of God and the sacred places and pray there. All these good works are possible. As for the mandatory Ḥajj, it is necessary only for him who is eligible. So, this question is fundamentally flawed. If Ḥajj is not mandatory for that person then there is no discussion in this matter.

As for visiting the sacred places,

[40] Fiqh Madhahib al-Arba'a
[41] Nail al-Autar
[42] Holy Qur'ān, 4[Al-Nisa]: 101
[43] Mishkat Page 232
[44] Tuḥfatul-Fuqaha Ch. 1 Page 239

it can only be done by traveling to Mecca and the reward will be according to the intention. One who goes to visit them will be rewarded according to his intention and the one who pays for it will be rewarded according to his. The underlying principal is that if a non-Muslim gives money to a Muslim because of good relationship and for good works, it can be accepted and spent to perform certain worships such as going to Mecca for Ḥajj, for the construction of a mosque, or for publishing the Holy Qur'ān, or any other religious literature. The Muslim who does this good work will be rewarded according to his intention and the one who provided the finances for his good relations, God will reward him too.

A companion asked the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), "Will I be rewarded for the good works that I did before accepting Islām?" The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) replied, "Recognition and blessing of accepting Islām is the result of those good works." The words of the narration are as follows:[45]

عَنْ حَكِيْمِ بْنِ حِزَامٍ قَالَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ اَرَأَيْتَ اَشْيَاءَ كُنتُ اَتَحَنَّثُ بِهَا فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ اَوْ عِتَاقَةٍ وَ صِلَةِ رَحِمٍ فَهَلْ فِيْهَا مِنْ اَجْرٍ فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اَسْلَمْتَ عَلٰى مَا سَلَفَ مِنْ خَيْرٍ

A person of Jewish faith gave seven of his best orchards to the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) for use in good works. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) accepted them. The name of that person was Mukhareeq. The Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said,[46]

مُخَيْرِيْقُ سَابِقُ يَهُوْدَ

Mukhareeq will be ahead of all the Jews.

The Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) accepted donations from a Hindu philanthropist for publishing of Barāhīn Ahmadiyya." Huzoor wrote in one of his announcements that is recorded in Barāhīn Ahmadiyya, volume 4 in 1887, "Vardar Ittar Singh, the great elder of Ludhiana, who is a Hindu elder has donated 25 rupees for help. It is his greatness and generosity. He has shown sympathy for Islām while being a Hindu."[47]

Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) accepted an invitation and an offering of a Hindu princess. In 1899, Huzoor was traveling to "Dhariwal." On the way, special messenger of Rani Eshar Kaur (resident of Dham, widowed daughter in-law of Sardar Jamil Singh) brought the invitation to stay at her place. Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) accepted that invitation and stayed at her place. She sent a platter of sweets and one of almonds for Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) as an offering, which her servants delivered. She also sent a message of appreciation and said that it was just like as her late father-in-law Sardar Jamil Singh is visiting. Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) simply replied, "Since you have hosted us, we will accept this offering too."[48]

Question: These days, the Ḥajj if being filmed and the recording is shown in theaters. What is the instruction of Jamā'at in this matter?

Answer: The standard view of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II is as follows:

1) If the movie is based upon natural scenery and real events then there is no problem. However, if it was prepared by filming actors, then it is prohibited.[49]
2) Theater is not inherently evil. In the present day, it has many forms which are detrimental to moral values. If a presentation is entirely educational or religious and does not contain any portion of entertainment it is permitted.[50]

[45] Bukhārī, Ch. 1 Page 193

[46] Isabah Ch. 3 Page 393

[47] Tabligh-e-Risalat Vol. 1 Page 43

[48] Malfuẓāt Vol 1. Page 292

[49] Al-Fazl July 2nd, 1944

[50] Mutalibat Tahrik-e-Jadīd Page 39

Interview with Respected Abdul-Karim

President Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community Chicago East

Interview by Naveed Ahmad Khan. Transcribed by Dr Mahmud Ahmad Nagi, Columbus, OH

Our Respected Brother, Abdul Karim President Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community, Chicago East, (left) was interviewed by Mr. Naveed Ahmad of LostScribeRadio (right) on 14th October 2016. LostScribeRadio is an independent radio and have motto Truth, Freedom, Love and Peace.

NAVEED AHMAD: Greeting. We are here today with Brother Abdul Karim, President of Aḥmadiyya Jamā'at Chicago East. He is a well-travelled researcher. He spent lot of his time learning religions. He has many compelling stories that I would like everyone to gain from and have him shared today with our viewers. I welcome you to the broadcast. How are you brother, Abdul Karim, today?

ABDUL KARIM: I am doing well.

NAVEED AHMAD: One of the things people don't know that lot of changes have happened during the last several decades in technology, science, art and culture. People don't know some of the more compelling stories of the past in terms of how people used to get information? There used to be hurdles. For example, you have to rebook to find someone who knows things; mentor type. The other thing is that people also don't understand. It was little bit more difficult to get accurate information. Now we have YouTube, global technology and pdf available on almost everything. It is easier to learn quicker now as oppose to before. I want you to give us a little bit of history in terms of your early youth and how you came to Islam.

ABDUL KARIM: As-Salamu 'Alaikum. My name is Abdul Karim. I want to give a little background and how I came to Islam. I was born and grown up in Mississippi. My family had a soccer office. As we grew up, one day we were in a particular farm and my sister said to me, "Everything that you do in this world, you have to give an account for it." When I cut my fingernails, I used to put them in water to know where they were to identify them. It is just to show you what frame of mind I was in. I was in Mississippi for quite some time. In Mississippi, my elder brother had been in military. He came to Chicago and opened his own business. He went to an Electrical College. He urged us to come here in Chicago for better life. He said, "If you do otherwise, I shall make sure that it happens." He shifted me there. It is strange how we loved Mississippi so much. It is similar to the people of that time when they loved Mississippi. We loved Mississippi especially in summer. We had a contract with a plantation owner for picking cotton from of crop. Month of June is crop time. We were waiting for the cotton flowers to open. It was an ideal time to leave the trade. My father being Mississippian had many friends. They shall talk from the afternoons and drink on Saturday nights. My father like other people around does the same. One Saturday, my father did not go there. He was waiting to move his furniture to his cousin's house in Tennessee. Our friend working with plantation owner came there. He said the man named Blue (plantation owner) is drunk and it shall be better for you to leave today or tonight. The people of the plantation owner won't allow us to leave. We were waiting from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. fearing that the plantation owner may come there. The truck came around sunset. We started the journey through a back road to 61 highways. We passed through a small town, Mound Bayou, the only town in the area that was owned by the blacks. They had their own Mayor and Police in 1957. Most of the blacks came there at that time. Most of the Blues and musicians were from that town. As we passed from there, we considered ourselves safe from the people of plantation owner. In case they catch us, they shall bring us back to the farm. Afterwards, we reached Tennessee. My eldest brother was waiting for us there. My other brother who shall take us to Chicago was still to arrive.

Finally, we arrived in Chicago. I studied at Hyde Park High School in the city of Chicago. We lived in the same block where the school was situated. It was unusual. My brother made sure that we were comfortable there. We were living in a place where we could flourish. We were from Baptist Christian family. My mother said to me one day that in Mississippi you used to go to church every Sunday. Now since you are here you don't go to church anymore. I said to her, "Mama, when I shall find that Christianity is true, I shall accept it. I am not a hypocrite. That is how my learning Islam came about. Now I had to actually prove my stance.

NAVEED AHMAD: So, you made a decision that the Baptist Christian faith is not for you at that time.

ABDUL KARIM: It was not. They were hypocrite and that was the only reason. They had no philosophy. They did not know what the religion talk. Jesus on the cross and that type of things were not a problem for me. I was not relying on that philosophy. On 63rd street I used to see a missionary Aminullah Khan. He refused to go back to Pakistan because he considered the country backward. He adapted to modern ways of life in USA. He was comfortable with that. He had assimilated himself in USA. There was a Muslim barber named Sultan who used to cut my hairs. He was a Muslim. I was fascinated because he had a beard. He advised about things here and there. I really engaged him about the teachings of Islam. I admired him from a distance.

I did not finish my high school. I was behind. So, I decided to drop out from day high school to a night school to get my high school diploma. I was not from an academic family. They one day told me, "Why don't you go and study GED and then go to college afterwards." I had no type of role model to encourage me to do and make my journey shorter. I was in night high school for three years. I finished it. Then I decided to do spring semester at Columbia College. I turned 22 years when United States put missiles in Cuba. The President of Cuba told US to remove these missiles otherwise they shall be removed. It created crises. During the period, I got drafted into US military. I went to Michigan to consult my cousin just to contemplate whether I should accept the draft or go to jail.

NAVEED AHMAD: Backdrop of which war?

ABDUL KARIM: I was considered being drafted into Cuban crises. Afterwards I decided not to be locked up in jail. I took my chances and accepted the draft. So I was drafted and posted in Fort Knox in Kentucky. That day was 22nd November 1963 when President Kennedy was shot. I became a bit rebellious in military. They taught me MOLS. I was specialized in ammunition storage. It was a war like situation. I was to supply weapons and ammunition for military needs. After that I was posted in France. I rebelled there. One day I decided not to even stand with the flag. People looked at me what was going on with the guy. I said to first Sargent, "I am not comfortable around ammunition as it makes me nervous." The background was that I had a record for not around ammunition. After six months, they changed my MOLS from 411.1 ammunition specialists to 0.74, which was actually special services. So only thing I did on that point on was to train the generation, which nobody wanted to do. I served my time. I was discharged in October a month before my stipulated time.

After serving the military I educated myself about Islam. While in military I wrote to Elijah Muhammad. He replied to visit him after military time is over. It was 1965 and I never wanted to visit him. There were some of his members in the building where I was living. They would give me Elijah Muhammad's speeches to read. I would also read their papers. On the back of the paper, it was stated about mother ship and all such type of things. It did not attract me.

I had an idea that we all are human beings. In Quran, it is written that best among you is the one who is righteous irrespective of what color or nationality you are in. The best among the human race is the one who is righteous. Then I looked around a place where I could go. By grace of God, in the building where I was living we had brother Masood Khan Latif. He got fed up with the situation in the building. The guys in the building were lecherous. I always was a person to work for my living. They were not workers. Some of them were musicians and others were artists etc. They did not move from that place during my service to military. We moved from there and I helped Masood Khan in moving from the building. One day Masood Khan said to me, "Why don't you go to mosque with me"? My Allah forced me to go to the mosque. I said, "Yes." I went to the mosque. It was Sunday. They gave speeches. There was Adhān. They all prayed and then we had a dinner. That mosque was in 4448 South Wabash Chicago. He asked me, "What do you think about." I asked what in Adhān was said "Allah-o-Akbar." He said, "It means Allah is Great." That was what I was also told by Elijah Muhammad. That was the time I embraced the teaching by reading books. I started going to the mosque frequently.

NAVEED AHMAD: What was the first book you read?

ABDUL KARIM: I do not remember the first book. But the book that influenced me was "Islam in Africa." It was written by late Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad. He was a missionary in Africa. One thing that stuck out was when Billy Graham went to Africa to propagate Christianity. He was invited by Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad for

"Mubāhala," i.e., prayer dual. He refused to accept it. I said to myself, "O Boy! How can this great evangelist known all over the world is not accepting the "Mubāhala." That particular thing perplexed me.

NAVEED AHMAD: The one who wrote the book "Islam in Africa." Let the viewers know what the Mubāhala is.

ABDUL KARIM: Mubāhala is written in Quran. Ḥaḍrat Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) invited Christian people from Niger for a discussion. At one time they wanted to go out for a service. The Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "You need not go out. You can have your services right here in the mosque." They did not accept the Mubāhala. But you look at it from this perspective. Mubāhala is that you pray to God and your opponent prays to God for the decision in the matter.

NAVEED AHMAD: Between truthfulness of two individuals.

ABDUL KARIM: Asking prayers from God.

NAVEED AHMAD: Essentially looking for a sign of approval from God as two people have opposing ideas in a religious matter.

ABDUL KARIM: Exactly sure. So that was in the Holy Quran.

NAVEED AHMAD: So Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad asked Billy Graham to engage in a Mubāhala to find out the truth between Islam and Christianity.

ABDUL KARIM: Exactly right.

NAVEED AHMAD: Billy Graham openly refused.

ABDUL KARIM: Another book I read was "Islam and Slavery." It was written by brother (Mirza Bashir Ahmad) of second Khalīfa. He was making a comparison between slaves freed in US and slaves freed at the time of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) i.e. slaves freed during Islamic times and during the life of the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He made sure that when slaves go elsewhere they are on their own. They were given skills and their needs. They were able to make their life. But in the Emancipation Proclamation (of USA) they just freed the slaves. Look when the animals are freed from the lockups, they just take off and run. They have no direction. That happened during the time of the Emancipation Proclamation Process. It was mind blowing. It looks simple. In Islam, there is equality among humans. Other civilizations have races in people. This is a type of yoke. They do not apply these principles.

NAVEED AHMAD: This is very important point because Islam is still considered among orientalists' scholars to be one of the religions that allow slavery. 1) People inherited slaves. 2) They were not breed based on physical characteristics or strength when they were given excuse to free slaves. The difference was the quality. Other issue was that it was an intrinsic part of the economy, slave ownership and slave labor. If you had given them emancipation, that is how you are expounding rights now, no mechanism to contribute to the society and uphold their own living standards.

ABDUL KARIM: The economy would have collapsed. That is the whole idea. The Holy Quran speaks of freedom of the slaves. But it is not like a stroke of pen. The people who are freed make his or her living.

NAVEED AHMAD: They have their personal dignity. If you are freed slave and opt beggary, then its not different from the slavery. In fact the slavery is better that you are given provisions for your sustenance.

ABDUL KARIM: Exactly sure. So reading that book "Islam and Slavery" had a profound effect on me. I being Afro American and coming from that background of people, consider myself being pure. It would be worthwhile that gradually my race of people eventually become self-sufficient or in other words be supporters of society. This is how I look at it. I read many books. I read book "The Philosophy of the teaching of Islam" written by our founder of Aḥmadiyya Movement. I began to read more of his books. I became a reader. Then gradually I grabbed the whole of Islam. That was 1965-66. Afterwards I did not let it go. I am still holding on to Islam.

NAVEED AHMAD: At that time, lots of things were going on politically. There was civil right movement. The Aḥmadiyya movement had a significant role in the process by which the nation of Islam was created, the Garvee movement; Noble Drew Ali had a movement. He had circled seven Quran. All these things started happening when the identity of black Americans and Afro-Americans started changing. They started absorbing different identities. The historians have written about it extensively. Early in 1900, there was lot of Afro Americans who decided to take on Muslim names, grow their beards and change their dress. They were actually treated differently by the racist dominant society. They thought, they are Moors or they have different civilization. Certain Afro Americans did not know what is the religion. They just knew they would be treated differently if they absorb some elements today. Jazz music was very big at that time. There were some very prominent jazz musicians who either started to flirt Islam or accept Islam; John Coltrane and his wife were among others.

ABDUL KARIM: I want to clear that. John Coltrane never accepted Islam or Aḥmadiyyat but Suleiman Saud was an Ahmadi Muslim, a black drummer who started the Messenger. There were others like Talib Dawud and

Sahib Shihab. I met our missionary last night. He remembered Sahib Shahab. He was there in Europe. Then there were Ahmad Jamal and Yusef Lateef. There were many who embraced Islam because of the environment they were in. Some stayed and some didn't. Yusef was one who stayed and progressed. I am speaking about two who stayed. Dissical Isabel was once Ahmadi Muslim.

NAVEED AHMAD: He also flirted with Baha'ism.

ABDUL KARIM: Exactly right. Also, Kokastatin the wife of Talib Dawud deserted. I was right there during that time. Lot of these musicians performed. They were considered non-conformists. That was the whole deal.

So, I began to grow my beard and began to wear different type of clothes to be distinguished from rest of the people. Afterwards Islam has such an effect on individuals. Islam gives individuality.

NAVEED AHMAD: That is a misconception about Islam. Lot of people think that Islam mandates conformism but that isn't. It is unfortunate that certain pockets of Muslims you know certain Sunni and Shia dress exactly the same way. They look exactly the same. It is more like a capitalistic than a communist society. In communistic society they raise their head above to look different. Islam is all about collectivity. It allows individuals to express in a very unique way, the way that they feel comfortable.

Tell us more about the Islamic influence on the culture and jazz music. The jazz musicians read more about Islam and adapted some of the Islamic trades. They learnt about these things. They started changing the way they communicated. They changed the music a bit and it became very attractive thing. They were like the ambassadors of Islam.

ABDUL KARIM: I think what people should do. The late brothers Rashid Ahmad two years ago, before he passed away, Nasir Islam sat with him and had a book out. The name of the book is "Perseverance." If you want to look at me as an Afro-American, you should also look into Afro-American experience. When you read the book from the beginning, he explains how Lewis grew up in Afro-American atmosphere influenced by him. Islabel was an individual who was influenced by his father. Islam teaches that each individual can have his own individuality. We have one thing in common. We must subsist in a system that God has made. We all can share things together. We are dependent on each other. If you don't have that reality as a Muslim, you may select to wear like this or wear like that and eat that type of food etc. Naturally we know Muslims don't eat pork.

NAVEED AHMAD: Maybe we have to come to the mosque on camel that is what the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did.

ABDUL KARIM: This individuality does mean that you actually don't conform to the system that God has established. Everybody shares in that. To be a complete human being you should be able to adapt. You don't go against that because here you are going against a natural system that has been put in place. So, if you subsist or in other words hold the individual, you can have your individuality. But you should be more or less part of the society.

NAVEED AHMAD: What was the effect on Islam of this culture and music?

ABDUL KARIM: When you read the Holy Quran, you read in a melodious manner.

NAVEED AHMAD: It is rhythmic.

ABDUL KARIM: You know, someone adapted this not because of that but the words are so beautiful. In other words it touched the heart. One point about late Muhammad Sadiq, when he accepted Islam, he never looked back. He looked up some of the people that grew playing music. They became beggars on the streets. He said, " I won't be that." He gave up the music and accepted Islam. He was able to save himself. So that is how it affected some of the musicians. Some of the musicians played music for a short time. But one thing if you accept Islam, then adopts all values Islam offers, and then you don't give up. The man is weak and sometimes does things that he should have not done.

NAVEED AHMAD: In the modern age, there is also an identity issue. Lot of people has understood that it seems the West has war with Islam even though obviously there is a nuance to that. Some of the Muslim youth not only outside but also inside US specially look at wars happening against Islam. Obviously Muslim world need to undergo changes because they have not observed lot of the benefits of the modern worlds. There is story that when the Saudis first found out about telephone, they thought it was a creation of devil. What happened until somebody have the foresight of the issue to do the Adhān in the phone and show the mechanism that it can be used for good or bad purposes. You can hunt a deer with a rifle or you can kill an innocent human with it. So, it is just a mean. Muslims have been lagging behind in adopting science and technology.

ABDUL KARIM: They used to be the leaders in science and technology.

NAVEED AHMAD: That is right. It was under Lucia in Spain. Mauritius emperor built it. That was a very pluralistic society ahead of Europe. They had running wars. Christians and Muslims used to live in peace for most part in that era. There was lot of benefits of giving knowledge under Islamic emperor. That is why lot of people gravitated. There was lot of books on every subject. Lot of Jews and Muslims were removed from the area. Some of the Jews became Christians. Ever

since in lot of ways it had been a deterioration process.

ABDUL KARIM: I like to say about this. When you talk about Islam, you talk about from very beginning of the religion 6,000 years ago from Prophet Adam. Man has progressed in many ways. You talk about the Bible. During the time of Adam, Bible was at very elementary stage. As the man began to grow, it began to evolve. He learnt in many ways about the world. We as an Ahmadi Muslim definitely believe in prophecies. We believe in Prophets to come that was prophesized by other Prophets. Usually when a Prophet appears on the face of the earth regardless where is he from, he is always going to be rejected.

NAVEED AHMAD: It is in Holy Quran that they are not only rejected but also marked.

ABDUL KARIM: When Islam came on the scene, the man had evolved. He was capable of receiving at that time one teaching that would be suitable for all men. We as an Ahmadi Muslims accepted what was prophesized and what was to come. We talk about Jesus. The Jews knew that he is going to come. When he came, very few accepted him. So even today Jews have not accepted Jesus on the ground that he was not the one who was to come. In prophecy or the prophecy being fulfilled and in the interpretations of prophecy, you have to realize that there are metaphors to understand. They missed that. Today, we believe that The Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prophesized coming of Mahdi. The Jews are waiting for Jesus and Muslims are waiting for Mahdi to come. In the latter days, he said, "When the Messiah shall come, they should act like the Jews. When the Messiah came, people shall act like the Jews. Jews were broken into 72 parts. The Islam is also broken into 73 parts. Only one would be on right track. When the Jesus came, all these 72 sects were there. There were only two tribes in Palestine and others had been migrated or had been sold to slavery.

NAVEED AHMAD: There were two tribes Judah and Benjamin, which remained.

ABDUL KARIM: For argument sake, if one of these tribes was correct, then there was no need of Jesus to come. The same is true for Islam. If the Muslims had not gone astray, there was no need for anyone to come to correct Muslims. Then the Messiah would never have appeared. But they had gone astray and Mahdi appeared to correct them. They also acted like other people and rejected him. The Mahdi was to come and was one of the 73 sects of Muslims. There is a hadith that the reinstitution of Khilāfat would be based on precept of the Prophethood. We also believe that the second manifestation of Khilāfat have taken place. We justified on the ground that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed to be a Nabi. That was the prophecy of Hazrat Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) otherwise he could have not claimed. The Khilāfat has fulfilled two purposes. To reinstate Islam. To reinstitute the institution of Khilāfat.

This is what our belief is. This is where we stand. We are here to discuss it openly with others. It is up to them to accept or reject Mahdi.

NAVEED AHMAD: That is correct. This is one of the differences between Aḥmadiyya Muslim views about all other sects. People look at Shiaism and Sunnism as a monolithic meaning that they think they have one leader and one ideology. They have not changed essentially. They have the majority and adherence of Islam between these two groups. You can find on scrutiny that there are 73 sects and between Sunni and Shia Islam there is a third sect. They are subdivided in sub sects and so on. They do not have one leader. Shias are a bit more organized. They have certain individual scholars and certain Ayatollahs. But for the Sunnis they are adamant against us. They have no leadership what so ever. They have no leader for a very long time.

ABDUL KARIM: Sure. There lies a difference between Shiites and Sunnis. They have not one head that may speak for the entire Muslim world.

NAVEED AHMAD: They do not have one leader in any country or they even don't have a leader in one city. They have leaders all over the place. In Quran, it is written to hold fast to one rope of Allah. The rope of Allah is Khilāfat or successor ship and it comes after the Prophet. The community shall be on the right track after accepting the Prophet.

ABDUL KARIM: One thing I like to say here. Allah has shown us in His creation that you cannot have 2-3 heads. The Christians talk about trinity father, son and Holy Spirit. The question is, are they equal? They say that they are equal. Then there is no need to have three. Let us see they are three and have equal powers. One likes to do certain thing and have the power to do so whereas other likes to do something different. That means there would be conflict. So, God has shown it to His creation the oneness. We have one Sun, one moon, country that has one President, and city has one Mayer. That is how God has established His oneness. No one is interfering in His creation for seen or unseen. There is no entity that shares in His creation. This is one thing that man should understand.

NAVEED AHMAD: The oneness of God leads to oneness of creation; oneness of humanity, which leads to oneness of Islam. All these sub-divisions are basically mechanism by which we harm each other, divide and create conflict.

ABDUL KARIM: Sure

NAVEED AHMAD: I was saying that Aḥmadiyyat

has different views. We are globally united. Now we have 5th caliph of the Aḥmadiyya Movement. We have had a history of over hundred years of science and technological progress. We have done as a community translation of the Holy Quran in over 70 languages, which has never been done by any other community before. This is an Islamic test. They always say that Aḥmadiyya Movement is supported by the British, the Jews, Israel and by Free Masonry. They do not want to show beauty of the Quran to the world. What we have done is an Islamic activity. We have done lot of humanitarian work. We have established lot of schools and hospitals especially in Latin America and Africa. We entered Spain where there was a ban to built a mosque for over 700+ years. There was no mosque in that area when the ban was lifted in seventies or eighties. Aḥmadiyya Movement was for the first one to establish a new mosque in Spain.

ABDUL KARIM: They welcomed us there.

NAVEED AHMAD: During the inauguration fourth caliph of Aḥmadiyya Movement Ḥaḍrat Mirza Tāhir Ahmad had Prof. Abdus Salam, a noble laureate in Nuclear Physics on his one side and on other side Chaudhry Muhammad Zafrulla Khan who had a position in United Nations, World Bank and International Court of Justice. Intellectual predominance of Islam, the seeds of that was reestablished by Aḥmadiyya Movement, which has already established dominance within the Islamic World. These were the two who were largely recognized by the ethicist world. They were the accomplished individuals. It was a symbolic moment. We were not only first to create a new mosque in Spain but also had a desire to grow in the intellectualism battleground. There was lot of key distinctive features of Ahmadiyya Islam in early 1900. They had Quran published along with other discourses in terms of debating with Christians because that was a Christian country at that time. We already created intellectual background. We developed proper weaponry to deal with all other religions in terms of intellectual, logical, rational and also prophetic because we have the prophecies in the Bible. We don't have to go to Quran to establish the truth of Islam. According to Bible, Islam shall be the ultimate truth. These are thing, which people forgot. The people who are not necessarily Muslims, the one who have not much involvement with the religion or interreligious discussions think that Islam is a separate religion. The Islam looks itself the summit of religious evaluation. All the other religions like Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and Zoroasterism we believe were truly Islam.

ABDUL KARIM: They all came from God and established oneness of God.

NAVEED AHMAD: Islam means peace through submission to the world of God.

ABDUL KARIM: I like to say about one of the biggest problems of the world. They don't want to stand what our teachings are. We have an Islam what they call fapolas. First of all, we believe in God.

NAVEED AHMAD: Oneness of God.

ABDUL KARIM: He is the sole Creator and Sustainer of the Heavens and the Earth. Then we believe in prayers. If we have a problem, although we pray every day, the person has something to pray for between the two prayers. We also believe that we should also share the bounties of God, i.e., we call it Zakat. We should share it for less fortunate people. We do what the Prophet of God has always done, i.e., Fast. We fast in the month of Ramaḍān. The purpose of fast is to be closer to God. Last pillar of Islam is to make it to Hajj, go there at least once in your lifetime. It is for those who can afford. There you see people from all background and talk about and share things, which benefit all of us.

NAVEED AHMAD: It reflects oneness of humanity. It experiences oneness. In fact, it is one thing that lead Malcolm away from the nation of Islam because once he went there and realized that people are not devils. The color and skin are irrelevant in Islam. Here you have brotherhood that spans all the colors from the darkest to the lightest. That is one thing Islam has to offer the world. What happens is that these are all relativistic terms and situations where Islam proposes an absolute justice, a universal justice. Islam encourages individual Muslim to seek at the very least justice and giving without expectation. If you are able to do that it is incumbent upon you to seek next level "Ita'izil-Qurba ایتَاء ذِی القربیٰ." Treat as if you are one another's brother sister, a very close-knit family. اِیتَاء ذِی القربیٰ

ABDUL KARIM: Another thing I like to say. I have a thought pattern and I say people don't know what the teachings of Islam are. We have an Islam with six articles of faith.

1. We believe in God. There is non-worthy of worship but the Creator Allah.

2. We also believe that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was His Prophet. We do believe in all other prophets. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said that 1,24000 Prophets appeared on the face of the earth. Some we know and others we don't know. We can only identify 24 Prophets as mentioned in the Holy Quran.

3. We believe in His books. The books sent down on these Prophets in purity are accepted. The man interrupted the purity of these teachings. Different things started to entertain, so on and so forth.

4. Then we believe in angels. We believe that Gabriel is the major angel. He is the one that was sent on Prophets. He brings the messages of God to the Prophets. I like to say more about angels. There are laws in operation in this universe that are controlled by angels. Let me give an example. If a person puts his hands on fire, what happens? He is going to be burnt. His hand shall burn according to nature's law. So, we look at all other laws. Everything has its own individual law.

NAVEED AHMAD: It is very important. The Muslims especially in Aḥmadiyya Movement don't believe in angels with fairies that fly around. The angels could be another world to enforce natural laws that God created and are in operation in the universe.

ABDUL KARIM: 5. We believe in the Heavens and the Hell. We like all other peoples who are religious in nature believe in the Heavens. It is prerogative of God to determine whether one is going to the Heaven or the Hell. We also believe that there is a Hell. We do not believe that Hell is eternal. You look at it as a hospital. If you have an ailment, what you do. You go to the hospital and get cured. Doctor gets you cured. Then you come back as cured person and resume activities in the society. There is a saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that one day the gates of the Hell will be locked. Nobody would be there, why? Because they have been purified. Now you are capable of going to the Heavens.

6. We believe in predestination. I like to give it in this sense. The predestination is a type that you are going to reap what you sow. I like to give an example of Prophet Noah. God sent Prophet Noah to preach to the people. They rejected him. He said, "If you do not accept me, I am going to punish you." He preached and the time passed. They refused to accept him. Then God said, "Enough is enough." The Prophet Noah said, "Those who shall come in my ark shall be saved and others shall be drowned." Even his son was drowned as a result of not coming to the ark.

Let us take another scenario. Look at the people when they began to question Jesus, "O Master, O Master show us sign." What he said? Only one sign is given just as Jonah was in the belly of whale for 3 days and 3 nights. So, shall the man of the earth be alive in the belly of earth for 3 days and 3 nights. It was similar to that sign. Jonah remained alive in the belly of whale for 3 days and 3 nights and came out alive. Jesus went in the tomb of Joseph (of Arimathea), a burial place, alive and came out alive. It can be proved from the Bible. Nicodemus (a physician by profession) saw blood gushing from the wounds when the soldier had pierced Jesus body. It means Jesus was not dead.

NAVEED AHMAD: They put two different types of balms one for the dead and other to heal the wounds of live body.

ABDUL KARIM: Jesus escaped from there and went on to meet his disciples. In Christian society, they talk about Thomas. Thomas did not believe that it was he. So, what he said, "Look at my hand? They pierce my hand on the cross. I am not a ghost. I am hungry. They gave him fish and honeycomb.

So, the people of Noah continued to reject him. The people of Jonah when he actually came back after he was kicked out by the whale, he went to his people and preached them. They accepted him. There are two things i.e. you reap what you sow. If you don't accept the things, the consequences will be as such. We believe in predestination. We say to people, "Look, we haven't gone to any Heaven. Let us tell you. We should look at the life you live in. How you can relate to afterlife? If I continue to be otherwise I am going to have bad consequences. But if I don't, let us face it, good consequences will come about. The predestination is the 6th article. The Prophets of God had been telling us about the consequences of good or bad deeds.

NAVEED AHMAD: In the modern context if you look at today, we see the world very much divided. What can Islam offer them?

What is Aḥmadiyyat within Islam offers the diverse people of the world. The diverse interests there allow them to express their individuality within the cohesive and spirituality enhancing form. So, whatever the activities they are engaged in their personal lives or creative abilities can be utilized to benefit all. Basically, how we can unite the human families. That is what Islam and Aḥmadiyyat offers to bring people under one banner and under one roof.

ABDUL KARIM: Our Khalīfa says every day and on daily basis that the world is on the brink of destruction if man does not do absolute justice. Its outcome is going to be all destruction and we are heading towards that direction. From time to time our Khalīfa is speaking to the heads of states, scholars, religious people, all types of other people. He is talking them exactly where the world is today and where we stand in the world today. If we do not amend our ways, we are doomed to destruction. We say there is no compulsion in religion. If you continue in the direction, you are going; you are on the path of destruction. If you change your course, we say, you have a chance. The human being is given a choice. He can accept or he can reject. Everyone has the choice. You can believe or disbelieve. So this is the nutshell.

NAVEED AHMAD: Accept to your benefit or reject to the determinant of yourself.

ABDUL KARIM: If the man doesn't change his ways, he is on the course of destruction.

NAVEED AHMAD: Now one of the things the people may allege that the religions say the same thing. The Christians are saying the same thing or Jews are saying the same thing i.e. Peace, about love and brother hood and unity. Can you give us more detail about what Ahmadiyya Movement is doing to create peace among the society, outside the community meaning those who are not yet Ahmadi Muslims? What we are doing in Latin America, Africa or here in United States or where there is a disaster? Give us some detail and also specifically here in Chicago. We recently purchased a very large property. It was a school that was abandoned on south side of Chicago 44th street. Tell us what plans we have for that and what we are doing on global scale as relate to aiding and helping humanity.

ABDUL KARIM: Humanity is humanity. We do not discriminate between white, black, blue, red and brown whoever they might be. We do not discriminate whether a person is Christian, Jew or having other type of religion. We don't care about that. It is not our concern. Our concern is to give help to needy regardless who you are. You alluded having a school south of Chicago on 44th streets. We have opened a public park for all people to come.

NAVEED AHMAD: What kind of services we are having?

ABDUL KARIM: The service we shall be having in near future is soup kitchen for hungry. We shall establish a medical center there for screening people. We want to establish some educational program for people there. Hopefully this year we shall be able to provide people in the neighborhood tax-free things. We have expectations that whatever the need is as long as it doesn't conflict with our teachings, right or wrong, we shall provide. We reckon more to come. I like to say Humanity First shall also be there. Now whenever there is a disaster throughout the world, US and in other parts of the world, we are there to serve people. As a matter of fact when the floods came in Pakistan, the Humanity First was there.

NAVEED AHMAD: In many areas, they were the first.

ABDUL KARIM: We Aḥmadīs were there. Actually, these are the people who annihilated us in Pakistan. We never say: "No". We are ready to serve.

NAVEED AHMAD: They exterminate us on the basis that we are not Muslims. We pretend to be Muslims.

ABDUL KARIM: We have no concern about that whether we are Muslims or not. We are there to serve humanity. That is what the Ahmadiyya Muslims have to offer to the world. We are in 207 countries now. The prophecy that Islam, i.e., Aḥmadiyyat would be spread to the four corners of the earth, has happened. The prophecy during the time of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of Ahmadiyya Muslims Community was fulfilled correctly. He said that he is from God. God communicated to him. God spoke to him that His message shall spread to the four corners of earth. We have actually accomplished that so far.

NAVEED AHMAD: That is right. I appreciate your coming to the show today. We shall definitely invite you again in the future. There were lots of insights gained today. I hope viewers gained a lot. If you are local and are in Chicago, please visit us at our current mosque. The address is: 4448 South Wabash Ave, Chicago, IL 60653.

We also have a community center called Sadiq Community Center. We have a soup kitchen. We shall be establishing clothing drives. We are going to have a place for mentor ship. Some of the individuals from our community who have excelled in certain areas of life shall be able to give their wisdom, their experiences and expertise to the younger kids to take advantage of. We are also going to create a library there. You will be able to get access to variety of different books on many different subjects. Basically, it is going to be very useful place to come in Bronxville Chicago. Hopefully we shall bring people from the neighborhood. It seems like starting to happen. We shall have a bit outside investment coming in the area and some bigger chain grocery stores. We are going to have a community center within a block of the historic mosque, the first missionary mosque in US in 1920 when we had a missionary Mufti Muhammad Sadiq who came to the United States and converted over 700 people. I believe in very short period of time i.e. two years. They were from all walks of life. They were white Americans. They were black Americans. They were individuals from other backgrounds as well. They were representatives from the whole community.

Anybody interested, anybody looking for more information, can contact us at Aḥmadiyya Community in south side of Chicago. We look forward to engaging you and work with you for better world. Thank you very much brother Abdul Karim again. I like to have you at some point again on the show. If you have any closing thought, please tell us.

ABDUL KARIM: Thanks for having me. You can contact and actually observe Ahmadiyya Muslim community on MTA. It is www.mta.tv. You can also see our live broadcast there. You can also observe us at Alislam.org. So, either you can come directly to the mosque to enquire about us at what times we have services. We have service every Friday at 1 O clock. We also have programs on weekends. It is Saturdays through Sundays. All you have to do look at the telephone directory and we are there. Our telephone

numbers are there. Our address is there. We are not hard to find. So, I like to thank Mr. Naveed Ahmad for inviting me here today. Hopefully I shall be able to come again and share with you whatever information I have.

NAVEED AHMAD: Thank you very much.

Diabetes – Part 2

Dr. Lutf ur Rehman. Nashville, TN

Risk factors for type 1 diabetes

Although the exact cause of type 1 diabetes is unknown, factors that may signal an increased risk include:

Family history: Your risk increases if a parent or sibling has type 1 diabetes.

Environmental factors: Circumstances such as exposure to a viral illness likely play some role in type 1 diabetes.

The presence of damaging immune system cells (autoantibodies): Sometimes family members of people with type 1 diabetes are tested for the presence of diabetes autoantibodies. If you have these autoantibodies, you have an increased risk of developing type 1 diabetes. But not everyone who has these autoantibodies develops diabetes.

Dietary factors: These include low vitamin D consumption, early exposure to cow's milk or cow's milk formula, and exposure to cereals before 4 months of age. None of these factors has been shown to directly cause type 1diabetes.

Geography: Certain countries, such as Finland and Sweden, have higher rates of type 1 diabetes.

Risk factors for prediabetes and type 2 diabetes

Researchers don't fully understand why some people develop prediabetes and type 2 diabetes and others don't. It's clear that certain factors increase the risk, however, including:

Weight: The more fatty tissue you have, the more resistant your cells become to insulin.

Inactivity: The less active you are, the greater your risk. Physical activity helps you control your weight, uses up glucose as energy and makes your cells more sensitive to insulin.

Family history: Your risk increases if a parent or sibling has type 2 diabetes.

Race: Although it's unclear why, people of certain races — including blacks, Hispanics, American Indians and Asian Americans — are at higher risk.

Age: Your risk increases, as you get older. This may be because you tend to exercise less, lose muscle mass and gain weight as you age. But type 2 diabetes is also increasing dramatically among children, adolescents and younger adults.

Gestational diabetes: If you developed gestational diabetes when you were pregnant, your risk of developing prediabetes and type 2 diabetes later increases. If you gave birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds (4 kilograms), you're also at risk of type 2 diabetes.

Polycystic ovary syndrome: For women, having polycystic ovary syndrome — a common condition characterized by irregular menstrual periods, excess hair growth and obesity — increases the risk of diabetes.

High blood pressure: Having blood pressure over 140/90 is linked to an increased risk of type 2 diabetes.

Abnormal cholesterol and triglyceride levels: If you have low levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL), or "good," cholesterol, your risk of type 2 diabetes is higher. Triglycerides are another type of fat carried in the blood. People with high levels of triglycerides have an increased risk of type 2 diabetes. Your doctor can let you know what your cholesterol and triglyceride levels are.

Risk factors for gestational diabetes

Any pregnant woman can develop gestational diabetes, but some women are at greater risk than are others. Risk factors for gestational diabetes include:

Age: Women older than age 25 are at increased risk.

Family or personal history: Your risk increases if you have prediabetes — a precursor to type 2 diabetes — or if a close family member, such as a parent or sibling, has type 2 diabetes. You're also at greater risk if you had gestational diabetes during a previous pregnancy, if you delivered a very large baby or if you had an unexplained stillbirth.

Weight: Being overweight before pregnancy increases your risk.

Race: For reasons that aren't clear, women who are black, Hispanic, American Indian or Asian are more

likely to develop gestational diabetes.

Tests for type 1 and type 2 diabetes and prediabetes

Glycated hemoglobin (A1C) test: This blood test indicates your average blood sugar level for the past two to three months. It measures the percentage of blood sugar attached to hemoglobin, the oxygen-carrying protein in red blood cells. The higher your blood sugar levels, the more hemoglobin you'll have with sugar attached. An A1C level of 6.5 percent or higher on two separate tests indicates that you have diabetes. An A1C between 5.7 and 6.4 percent indicates prediabetes. Below 5.7 is considered normal.

If the A1C test results aren't consistent, the test isn't available, or if you have certain conditions that can make the A1C test inaccurate — such as if you're pregnant or have an uncommon form of hemoglobin (known as a hemoglobin variant) — your doctor may use the following tests to diagnose diabetes:

Random blood sugar test: A blood sample will be taken at a random time. Regardless of when you last ate, a random blood sugar level of 200 (mg/dL) or higher suggests diabetes.

Fasting blood sugar test: A blood sample will be taken after an overnight fast. A fasting blood sugar level less than 100 mg/dL is normal. A fasting blood sugar level from 100 to 125 mg/dL is considered prediabetes. If it's 126 mg/dL or higher on two separate tests, you have diabetes.

Oral glucose tolerance test: For this test, you fast overnight, and the fasting blood sugar level is measured. Then you drink a sugary liquid, and blood sugar levels are tested periodically for the next two hours. A blood sugar level less than 140 mg/dL is normal. A reading of more than 200 mg/dL after two hours indicates diabetes. A reading between 140 and 199 mg/dL indicates prediabetes.

If type 1 diabetes is suspected, your urine will be tested to look for the presence of a byproduct produced when muscle and fat tissue are used for energy when the body doesn't have enough insulin to use the available glucose (ketones). Your doctor will also likely run a test to see if you have the destructive immune system cells associated with type 1 diabetes called autoantibodies.

Complication of Diabetes:

Long-term complications of diabetes develop gradually. The longer you have diabetes — and the less controlled your blood sugar — the higher the risk of complications. Eventually, diabetes complications may be disabling or even life threatening. Possible complications include:

Cardiovascular disease: Diabetes dramatically increases the risk of various cardiovascular problems, including coronary artery disease with chest pain (angina), heart attack, stroke and narrowing of arteries (atherosclerosis). If you have diabetes, you are more likely to have heart disease or stroke.

Nerve damage (neuropathy): Excess sugar can injure the walls of the tiny blood vessels (capillaries) that nourish your nerves, especially in your legs. This can cause tingling, numbness, burning or pain that usually begins at the tips of the toes or fingers and gradually spreads upward. Left untreated, you could lose all sense of feeling in the affected limbs. Damage to the nerves related to digestion can cause problems with nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or constipation. For men, it may lead to erectile dysfunction.

Kidney damage (nephropathy): The kidneys contain millions of tiny blood vessel clusters (glomeruli) that filter waste from your blood. Diabetes can damage this delicate filtering system. Severe damage can lead to kidney failure or irreversible end-stage kidney disease, which may require dialysis or a kidney transplant.

Eye damage (retinopathy): Diabetes can damage the blood vessels of the retina (diabetic retinopathy), potentially leading to blindness. Diabetes also increases the risk of other serious vision conditions, such as cataracts and glaucoma.

Foot damage: Nerve damage in the feet or poor blood flow to the feet increases the risk of various foot complications. Left untreated, cuts and blisters can develop serious infections, which often heal poorly. These infections may ultimately require toe, foot or leg amputation.

Skin conditions: Diabetes may leave you more susceptible to skin problems, including bacterial and fungal infections.

Hearing impairment: Hearing problems are more common in people with diabetes.

Alzheimer's disease: Type 2 diabetes may increase the risk of Alzheimer's disease. The poorer your blood sugar control, the greater the risk appears to be. Although there are theories as to how these disorders might be connected, none has yet been proved.

Bismillāh-ir-Rahmān-ir-Rahīm بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ : In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. As-Salāmu ‘Alaikum Wa Raḥmatullāh اَلسَّلَامُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَرَحۡمَةُ اللّٰهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهٗ Peace be with you and mercy of Allāh and His blessings. Jazakallah جَزَاكَ اللّٰه to a male, Jazakillah جَزَاكِ اللّٰه to a female, Jazakumullah جَزَاكُمُ اللّٰه to any and all. Thank you. Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raji‘un اِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَ اِنَّا اِلَيۡهِ رٰجِعُوۡن. In Sha’ Allah اِنۡ شَاءَ اللّٰه. Ma Sha’ Allah مَا شَاءَ اللّٰه. Al-Hamdu Lillah اَلۡحَمۡدُ لِلّٰه. Barakallahu Lakum بَارَكَ اللّٰهُ لَكُمۡ. Yarahmkillah يَرۡحَمُكَ اللّٰه for female, Yahamkallah يَرۡحَمُكِ اللّٰه for male, Yarhamkumullah يَرۡحَمُكُمُ اللّٰه for all.

Salat صَلٰوۃ. Tahajjud تَهَجُّدْ. Fajr فَجۡر. Zuhr ظُهۡر. Asr عَصۡر. Maghrib مَغۡرِب. Isha عِشَا. Nafl نَفۡل. Fard فَرۡض. Sunnah سُنَّه. Witr وِتۡر. Tarawih تَرَاوِیۡح. Takbir تَکۡبِیۡر. Adhan اَذَان. Jumu’ah/Jum‘ah جُمعَه. Masjid مَسۡجِد mosque.

Ramadan رَمَضَان.Saum صَوۡم. Iftar اِفۡطَار. Iftari اِفۡطَارِی . Sahar سَحَرۡ time before daybreak. Suhur/sahur سحُوۡر : last (light) meal before daybreak during Ramaḍān. ‘Id or Eid عِیۡد. ‘Id-ul-Fitr عِیۡدُ الۡفِطۡر. Hajj حَج. ‘Id-ul-Adha عِیۡدُ الۡاَضۡحٰی. ‘Id Mubarak عِیۡد مُبَارَك . Fitrana فِطۡرانَه. Fidya فِدیَه . Zakat زَکٰوۃ -Fiqh فِقۡه . Sharia‘ah شَرِیۡعَه. Qaul-i-Sadeed قولِ سدید.

Sallallahu ‘Alaihi Wa Sallam صلَّی اللّٰہُ عَلَیۡہِ وَ سَلَّم may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him (s.a.w.). ‘Alaihis-Salam عَلَیۡہِ السَّلَام may peace be upon him (a.s.). Masih-i-Mau‘ud مسیح موعود Promised Messiah. Muslih-i-Mau‘ud مصلح موعود Promised Reformer. Hadrat/Hazrat حَضرَت . Khalifa خَلِیۡفَه. Khilafat خِلَافَت . Radiyallahu’Anhu/’Anha/’Anhum رَضِیَ اللّٰہُ عَنۡہُ، عَنۡہَا، عَنۡہُم may Allah be pleased with him/her/them. Rahimahullah رَحِمَہُ اللّٰہ may mercy of Allah be upon him. Ayyadahullahu Ta’ala Be Nasrihil-‘Aziz اَیَّدَہُ اللّٰہُ تَعَالٰی بِنَصۡرِہِ الۡعَزِیۡز. Imam اِمَام. Jama‘at جَمَاعَت.Maulawi مَوۡلَوِی. Muballigh مُبَلِّغ. Murabbi مُرَبِّی. Bai‘at بَیۡعَت Initiation. Jami‘ah جَامِعَه. Jalsa Salana جلسہ سالانہ Annual Convention. Ijtima اِجۡتِمَاع Rallye. Ijlas اِجۡلَاس meeting. Tilawat تِلَاوَت recitation from the Holy Quran. Nazm نَظۡم poem. Ansaullah اَنۡصَارُ اللّٰه. Khuddam-ul-Ahmadiyya خُدَّامُ الۡاَحۡمَدِیَّه. Atfal-ul-Ahmadiyya اَطۡفَالُ الۡاَحۡمَدِیَّه. Lajna Ima’illah لَجۡنَه اِمَاءِ اللّٰه. Nasirat-ul-Ahmadiyya نَاصِرَاتُ الۡاَحۡمَدِیَّه. ‘Alam-i-In‘ami عَلَمِ اِنۡعَامِی. Khutbah خُطۡبَه. Majlis-i-Sihhat مجلسِ صحّت.

Amilah عَامِلَه. Ameer اَمِیۡر. Imarat اِمَارَت. Shura شُوریٰ. Sadr صدر. Qa’id قَاۤئِد. Nazim نَاظِم. Muhtamim مُهۡتَمِمۡ. Muntazim مُنۡتَظِم. Na’ib نائب.Nizarat نِظَارَت. Ta‘lim تَعۡلِیۡم. Isha‘at اِشَاعَت. Umur Ammah اُمُور عَامَّه. Qada قَضَا. Qadi قَاضِی. Tarbiyat تَرۡبِیَت Training. Tabligh تَبۡلِیۡغ Outreach. Umur Kharijiyya اُمُوۡر خَارجِیَّه Public Affairs. Khidmat-i-Khalq خدمتِ خلق. Ithar اِیۡثَار. Tahrik Jadid تحریک جدید. Daftar دفتر. Waqf Jadid وقف جدید. Chanda Am چندہ عام. Wasiyyat وَصِیَّت. Wasaya وَصَایَا. Ja’idad جائیداد. Rishta Nata رشتہ ناتا Matrimonial Matters. Ta‘limul-Quran. Waqf-e-Nau وقفِ نو. Diyafat ضِیَافَت. Sam‘i Wa Basri سَمۡعِی و بَصرِی.Audio and Video. Mal مال Finance. Sadaqa صَدَقَه. Chanda چندہ. Musi/Moosee مُوصِی. Musiyyah/Moosiyyah مُوۡصِیَّه. Purdah (Parda) پردہ Hijab حِجَاب. Niqab نِقَاب. Haya حَیَا modesty. Nikah نِکَاح. Khul‘ خُلۡع. Talaq طَلَاق.

Baitullah بَیۡتُ اللّٰه. Ka‘bah/Ka‘abah کَعۡبَه . Bait-ur-Rahman بَیۡتُ الرَّحۡمٰن. Bait-ul-Hameed بَیۡتُ الۡحَمِیۡد. Bait-un-Naseer بَیۡتُ النَّصِیۡر. Bait-ul-Amn بَیۡتُ الۡاَمۡن. Bait-ul-Aman بَیۡتُ الۡاَمَان. Bait-ut-Tahir بَیۡتُ الطَّاهِر. Bait-ul-Ahad بَیۡتُ الۡاَحَد . Bait-us-Salam بَیۡتُ السَّلَام. Darudh-Dhikr/Daruz-Zikr دَارُ الذِّکۡر. Bait-ul-Jami‘ بَیۡتُ الجَامِع .

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ইমাম মাহ্‌দী (আঃ) এর আবির্ভাব

"তিনিই উম্মীদের মধ্যে তাহাদেরই মধ্য হইতে এক রসূল আবির্ভূত করিয়াছেন, যে তাহাদের নিকট তাঁহার আয়াতসমূহ আবৃত্তি করে, এবং তাহাদিগকে পরিশুদ্ধ করে, এবং তাহাদিগকে কিতাব ও হিকমত শিক্ষা দেয়, যদিও পূর্বে তাহারা প্রকাশ্য ভ্রান্তির মধ্যে ছিল। এবং (তিনি তাহাকে আবির্ভূত করিবেন) তাহাদের মধ্য হইতে অন্য লোকের মধ্যেও যাহারা এখন পর্যন্ত তাহাদের সঙ্গে মিলিত হয় নাই। এবং তিনি মহাপ্রাক্রমশালী, পরম প্রজ্ঞাময়।"

(আল্ জুমু'আঃ ৩-৪)

আজ থেকে শতাধিক বছর আগে ১৮৮৯ খৃষ্টাব্দে তথা ১৩০৬ হিজরী সনে ভারতের পাঞ্জাব প্রদেশের এক নিভৃত গ্রামে হযরত মির্যা গোলাম আহ্‌মদ (আঃ) সেই প্রতিশ্রুত মহাপুরুষ হবার দাবী করেন। আহ্‌মদীয়া মুসলিম জামা'ত পবিত্র কুরআন ও হাদীসের আলোকে তাঁকে যাঁচাই করে সত্য মাহ্‌দী ও প্রতিশ্রুত মসীহ্ হিসাবে গ্রহণের তৌফিক লাভ করেছি। কুরআনের ভবিষ্যদ্বাণী ও সহীহ্ হাদীসের আলোকে একথা সুস্পষ্ট, খাতামান্নাবীঈন (সাঃ)-এর আধ্যাত্মিক কল্যাণে ও তাঁর আনুগত্যে তাঁরই উম্মত হতে ইমাম মাহ্‌দী ও প্রতিশ্রুত মসীহ্'র চতুর্দশ শতাব্দীর শিরোভাগে আগমনের কথা। হযরত মির্যা সাহেব তদনুযায়ী সঠিক সময়ে আগমন করেছেন।

মহানবী (সাঃ) বলেছেন:
"ইমাম মাহ্‌দী আবির্ভূত হবার সংবাদ পাওয়া মাত্রই তাঁর হাতে বয়'আত করিও, যদি বরফের উপর হামাগুড়ি দিয়েও যেতে হয়; কেননা নিশ্চয় তিনি আল্লাহ্‌র খলীফা আল-মাহ্‌দী"।

(সুনানে ইবনে মাজা-বাবু খুরূজুল মাহ্‌দী)

যাঁরা মহানবী হযরত মুহাম্মদ (সাঃ)-এর উপরোক্ত আদেশানুযায়ী তাঁকে মান্য করে তাঁর বয়'আত গ্রহণ করেছেন তারাই আহ্‌মদীয়া মুসলিম জামা'তের সদস্য।

আহ্‌মদীয়া মুসলিম জামা'তের প্রতিষ্ঠাতা হযরত মির্যা গোলাম আহ্‌মদ কাদিয়ানী (আঃ) {জন্ম ১৮৩৫, মৃত্যু ১৯০৮ খৃঃ}। তিনি আল্লাহ্ তা'আলার নিকট থেকে ইলহাম প্রাপ্ত হয়ে জগতের সংশোধনকল্পে মহান আল্লাহ্‌র পক্ষ থেকে প্রত্যাদিষ্ট হবার দাবী করেন আর বলেন, তিনি সেই 'প্রতিশ্রুত মসীহ্' ও মাহ্‌দী যাঁর আগমনের সুসংবাদ স্বয়ং মহানবী হযরত মুহাম্মদ মোস্তফা (সাঃ) করেছিলেন, যাঁর আবির্ভাবের মাধ্যমে সব ধর্মমতের ওপর ইসলাম ধর্মের বিজয় নির্ধারিত।

ইমাম মাহ্‌দী (আঃ)-এর সত্যতা সম্পর্কে হযরত রসূল করীম (সাঃ) বলেছেন:

“নিশ্চয় আমাদের মাহ্দীর সত্যতার এমন দু’টি লক্ষণ আছে, যা আকাশমন্ডল ও পৃথিবী সৃষ্টি অবধি আজ পর্যন্ত অন্য কারও সত্যতার নিদর্শন স্বরূপ প্রদর্শিত হয়নি। একই রমযান মাসে (চন্দ্র গ্রহণের) প্রথম রাতে চন্দ্র গ্রহণ হবে এবং (সূর্য গ্রহণের) মধ্যম তারিখে সূর্য গ্রহণ হবে”। ***(দারকুতনী-১৮৮ পৃঃ এবং আরও ছয়টি প্রসিদ্ধ কিতাবে এই হাদীস বর্ণিত হয়েছে)***

উল্লেখিত গ্রহণদ্বয় ১৮৯৪ খৃষ্টাব্দে পূর্ব গোলার্ধে এবং ১৮৯৫ খৃষ্টাব্দে পশ্চিম গোলার্ধে সংঘটিত হয়েছে। ***(আযাদ পত্রিকা উর্দূ লাহোর, ৪ ডিসেম্বর ১৮৯৫ খৃষ্টাব্দ, সিভিল এন্ড মিলিটারী গেজেট, লাহোর, ৬ ডিসেম্বর ১৮৯৬ খৃষ্টাব্দ), এছাড়া চন্দ্রপাড়ার পীর সাহেবের পুস্তিকা ‘মদীনা কলকি অবতারের সফিনা’, পৃষ্ঠাঃ ২৫)***

হযরত মির্যা গোলাম আহ্মদ (আঃ) প্রথম ২৩ মার্চ, ১৮৮৯, ভারতের লুধিয়ানা শহরে চল্লিশজন নিষ্ঠাবান ব্যক্তির বয়’আত গ্রহণ করেন আর মহানবী (সাঃ)-এর **‘আহ্মদ’** নাম অনুযায়ী এই জামা’তের নাম **‘আহ্মদীয়া মুসলিম জামা’ত’** রাখেন।

তিনি পবিত্র কুরআন থেকে অকাট্টরূপে প্রমাণ করেন, বনী ইসরাঈলী নবী হযরত ঈসা (আঃ)-এর স্বাভাবিক মৃত্যু হয়েছে। তিনি প্রায় ৮৮ খানা পুস্তক রচনা করেন এবং খৃষ্টান, আর্য্য-সমাজী আর অন্যান্য ধর্মাবলম্বীদের পক্ষ থেকে পরিচালিত ইসলাম-বিরোধী হামলাসমূহকে তিনি আজীবন নজিরবিহীনভাবে প্রতিহত ও পরাভূত করেন। ১৯০৮ সনে তাঁর মৃত্যুর পর রসূল করীম (সাঃ)-এর ভবিষ্যদ্বাণী (খিলাফত আলা মিনহাজিন্ নবুওয়ত) অনুযায়ী আহ্মদীয়া মুসলিম জামা’তে নবুওয়তের পদ্ধতিতে খিলাফত পুনরায় প্রতিষ্ঠিত হয়। এই জামা’তের বর্তমান খলীফা হলেন হযরত মির্যা মাসরূর আহমদ (আই:)। খিলাফত ব্যবস্থার কল্যাণে এই জামা’ত এখন বিশ্বের ২০৬টি দেশে হাজার হাজার শাখায় বিস্তৃত। কোটি কোটি মানুষ ইতোমধ্যে এই ঐশী জামা’তে অন্তর্ভূক্ত হয়েছেন। শিক্ষা ও স্বাস্থ্য ক্ষেত্রে পিছিয়ে পড়া জাতি তথা আফ্রিকায় এ জামা’ত শত শত শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান ও হাসপাতাল স্থাপন করেছে। এছাড়া এ জামা’ত স্যাটেলাইট টেলিভিশন MTA (মুসলিম টেলিভিশন আহ্মদীয়া)-এর মাধ্যমে দিবারাত্র বিশ্বের প্রধান প্রধান ৮টি ভাষায় ইসলামের সৌন্দর্য্য এবং শান্তিপূর্ণ শিক্ষা প্রচার করে যাচ্ছে। **(উৎসঃ www.ahmadiyyabangla.org)**

সত্যের পথে যাত্রা

(এই অনুচ্ছেদে আহ্মদীয়া মুসলিম জামা’তে অংশগ্রহণকারী নতুন সদস্যদের আহ্মদীয়াত গ্রহণের অনুভূতি ও অভিজ্ঞতা তুলে ধরা হবে। এবারের সংখ্যার জন্য লিখেছেন মহুয়া আমান সাহেবা)

আহ্মদীয়াতের এই পবিত্র খেলাফত এক ঐশী নেয়ামত। আল্লাহ্তায়ালার অশেষ রহমত ও করুণায় আমার বয়াত গ্রহণের মাধ্যমে আহ্মদীয়াতের তথা খাঁটি ইসলামের এই নবজাগরণের যাত্রায় অংশগ্রহণের তৌফিক মিলেছে। আমার ছোট বোন এবং তার স্বামী (আমার খালাত ভাই) আহ্মদীয়াত গ্রহণ করেছিল। আমার খালাত ভাই আমাকে আহ্মদীয়াতের কিছু বই দিয়েছিল পড়তে। এছাড়া ইউটিউবে পরবর্তীতে “সত্যের সন্ধানে” অনুষ্ঠান দেখতাম। এভাবেই আমি হযরত ঈসা (আঃ)এর মৃত্যু এবং ইমাম মাহ্দী (আঃ) এর আগমন সম্পর্কে নিশ্চিত হই এবং বয়াত গ্রহণের মাধ্যমে আহ্মদীয়া মুসলিম জামা’তে অন্তর্ভূক্ত হই। পরম করুণাময় আল্লাহ্তায়ালার কাছে আমি অত্যন্ত শুকর গুজার যে তিনি আমাকে এই সত্যের সন্ধান দিয়েছেন এবং গ্রহণ করার তৌফিক দিয়েছেন।

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA National Calendar 2017

January 7-8 Sat-Sun.....Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities .....Jamā'at/Local
January 8 Sun.....Review of 2016 Activities and Plan for 2017 Activities.....Jamā'at/Local
January 13-15 Fri-Sun.....Anṣār Leadership Conference
January 22 Sun.....Sīratun-Nabī Day ..... Jamā'at/National
January 27-29 Fri-Sun.....Majlis-i-Ṣiḥḥat Event
February 4-5 Sat-Sun.....Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities .....Jamā'at/Local
February 11 Sat .....National Āmilah Meeting (Los Angeles, CA) ..... Jamā'at/National
February 11 Sat .....Regional Refresher Course (Los Angeles, CA) (Afternoon)
February 17-18 Fri-Sat .....Public Affairs Seminar 2017 (Bait-ur-Raḥmān, MD) ..... Jamā'at/National
February 26 Sun.....Muṣliḥ Mau'ūd Day..... Jamā'at/Regional/Local
March 4-5 Sat-Sun .....Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities .....Jamā'at/Local
March 18 Sat.....National Āmilah Meeting (Bait-ur-Raḥmān, Silver Spring MD) ..... Jamā'at/National
March 18-19 Sat-Sun.....National Tarbiyat and Tahir Academy Meeting (Bait-ur-Raḥmān, MD) ..... Jamā'at/National
March 25 Sat.....Masīḥ Mau'ūd Day ..... Jamā'at/Regional/Local
March 31-April 2 Fri-Sun.....Lajna Mentoring Conference
April 1-2 Sat-Sun .....Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities .....Jamā'at/Local
April 2 Sun.....Taḥrīk Jadīd Day..... Jamā'at/National
April 8 Sat.....Qaḍa Orientation Seminar (Bait-ur-Raḥmān, MD)..... Jamā'at/National
April 9 Sun.....Waqf-i-Nau Evaluation & Parents Day Jamā'at ..... /Regional/Local
April 14-16 Fri-Sun.....Marital Matters Awareness..... Jamā'at/National
April 14-16 Fri-Sun.....12th Boys Trip to Jāmi'ah Canada..... Jamā'at/National
April 22-23 Sat-Sun .....Local Qur'ān Conference..... Jamā'at/National
April 28–30 Fri-Sun .....National Majlis-i-Shūrā ..... Jamā'at/National
May 6-7 Sat-Sun.....Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities .....Jamā'at/Local
May 12-19 Fri-Fri .....Humanity First Awareness Week
May 13-14 Sat-Sun.....Anṣārullāh Regional Ijtimā'
May 20 Sat.....National Āmilah Meeting (Oshkosh)..... Jamā'at/National
May 21 Sun .....Khilāfat Day..... Jamā'at/Regional/Local
27 May 25 June Sat-Sun .....Ramaḍān
June 3-4 Sat-Sun.....Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities .....Jamā'at/Local
June 26 Mon.....Eid-ul-Fitr
July 1-2 Sat-Sun .....Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities .....Jamā'at/Local
July 5-12 Wed-Wed.....3rd Waqf-i-Nau Training Camp 2017 (Bait-ur-Raḥmān, MD) ..... Jamā'at/National
July 7-9 Fri-Sun.....Jalsa Sālāna Canada.....
July 7-9 Fri-Sun.....Spiritual Fitness Camps .....
July 14-16 Fri-Sun .....Jalsa Sālāna USA
July 16-23 11th .....11th Waqf-e-Nau Boys Jāmi'ah Orientation Camp (Hādī Mosque, Harrisburg, PA)..... National
July 28-30 Fri-Sun.....Jalsa Sālāna UK.....
August 5-6 Sat-Sun .....Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities .....Jamā'at/Local
August 5-20 Sat-Sun .....Ḥifẓ-ul-Qur'ān Class ..... Jamā'at/National
August 12 Sat .....National Āmilah Meeting (New York, NY)..... Jamā'at/National
August 12 Sat .....Regional Refresher Course (New York, NY) (Afternoon)...../
August 12-13 Sat-Sun .....Spiritual Fitness Camps ...../
25-27 August Fri-Sun.....Jalsa Sālāna Germany
September 1 Fri .....Eid-ul-Aḍḥā ...../
September 2-3 Sat-Sun .....Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities .....Jamā'at/Local
September 8-9 Fri-Sat .....Lajna Day on the Hill, Lajna Public Affairs Seminar
September 8-10 Fri-Sun .....Marital Matters Awareness..... Jamā'at/National
September 15-17 Fri-Sun.....Lajna East Coast Ijtimā' ...../
September 23 Sat .....National Āmilah Meeting (Bait-ur-Raḥmān, Silver Spring, MD) ..... Jamā'at/National
September 23-24 Sat-Sun.....National Anṣārullāh Ijtimā ...../
September 24 Sun .....Taḥrīk Jadīd Day..... Jamā'at/National
October 7-8 Sat-Sun.....Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities .....Jamā'at/Local
October 13-22 Fri-Sun .....Taḥrīk Jadīd Collection Week..... Jamā'at/National
October 15 Sun .....Religious Founders Day..... Jamā'at/National
October 27-29 Fri-Sun .....Lajna Majlis-i-Shūrā
October 28 Sat.....National Āmilah Meeting (Detroit, MI) ..... Jamā'at/National
October 28 Sat.....Regional Refresher Course (Detroit, MI) (Afternoon)
November 4-5 Sat-Sun.....Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities .....Jamā'at/Local
November 4-5 Sat-Sun.....West Coast Qur'an Conference ..... Jamā'at/West Coast
November 19 Sun .....Sīrat-un-Nabi Day..... Jamā'at/Regional/Local
November 25 Sat .....Humanity First National Annual Telethon .....
December 2-3 Sat-Sun .....Local Jamā'at/Auxiliary Activities .....Jamā'at/Local
December 9 Sat .....National Āmilah Meeting (Bait-ur-Raḥmān, Silver Spring, MD) ..... Jamā'at/National
December 22-24 Fri-Sun .....West Coast Jalsa Sālāna
December 26-28 Tue-Thur.....Jalsa Sālāna Qadian

BOLETÍN AHMADÍA

Boletín Oficial de la Comunidad Musulmana Ahmadía de EE.UU.- Una publicación bimensual, espiritual y educativa

Nuestras responsabilidades

Resumen del sermón del viernes del 28 de julio de 2017

Por la gracia de Al-lah, hoy comienza el Llalsa Salana de Inglaterra. Durante estos días debemos mantenernos ocupados en las oraciones para que Al-lah conceda éxito a este Llalsa y nos mantenga a salvo de los enemigos.

Los huéspedes poseen muchos derechos en el Islam, pero al mismo tiempo también se les ha impuesto responsabilidades que deben recordar. Cuando los huéspedes y los anfitriones cumplan sus derechos, Llalsa se convertirá en un éxito.

Recordad que el verdadero objetivo del Llalsa es aumentar el *Taqwa* y la relación con Al-lah y sacrificarse por el prójimo. Debe tenerse siempre en cuenta este propósito . En cuanto a los huéspedes no áhmadis, quienesquiera que sean, debemos atenderles de la mejor forma de acuerdo con nuestros recursos.

Para conseguir que el Jalsa tenga éxito, los áhmadis que asisten al Jalsa deberían considerarse a sí mismos como anfitriones e invitados. Los huéspedes áhmadis deben recordar que los trabajadores son voluntarios, no nuestros sirvientes. Por lo tanto, debéis dirigiros con amabilidad hacia ellos y si no pueden satisfacer vuestra petición debéis aceptarlo sinceramente.

Los voluntarios deben ocuparse de todo, pero los invitados no deben quejarse de cosas pequeñas. Deben tener en cuenta que estamos aquí para buscar las bendiciones del Jalsa y beneficiarnos de las oraciones del Mesías Prometido (as).

Huzur dio instrucciones específicas tanto a los huéspedes como a los anfitriones sobre la comida, el transporte, la seguridad, el estacionamiento, etc. Instó a continuar orando por el éxito del Llalsa y a escuchar los procedimientos del Jalsa con mucha atención. También se organizaron diferentes exposiciones y conferencias educativas a través de Review of Religions, de as cuales debemos beneficiarnos según nuestro propio interés.

El Mesías Prometido (as) dijo que no deseaba para sí mismo ni para su Comunidad que se enfocaran en gran medida en el aparente estilo de los discursos. Más bien todo lo que dice debe hacerse por la causa de Al-lah y debemos escuchar estos discursos con la intención de practicar lo que se escucha. Una de las razones más importantes de la caída de los musulmanes fue exagerar el estilo externo de los discursos.

Huzur-e-Anwar (aba) dijo que los eruditos áhmadis exponen muchos puntos espirituales y educativos en sus discursos, de los cuales deberíamos beneficiarnos. Que Al-lah nos permita alcanzar el verdadero propósito del Llalsa Salana. Amin.

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Del Sagrado Corán

¡Oh vosotros los que creéis! Temed a Al-.ah como debe ser temido
y no permitáis que os llegue la muerte si no estáis sometidos
Y aferraos fuertemente todos juntos con la cuerda de Al-lah y no os dividáis.
Y recordad el favor de Al.lah que Él os concedió cuando erais enemigos
y Él unió vuestros corazones en el amor,
para que con Su gracia os hiciérais como hermanos:
estabais al borde de un abismo de fuego y Él os salvó.
Así os explica Al.lah Sus mandamientos para que seáis guiados.

(C.2: V. 184-185)

Ahadiz (Relatos del Santo Profeta[sa])

El Santo Profeta dijo a Muawiah:
"Cuando Dios da autoridad a alguien sobre los musulmanes y esta persona
coloca una barrera entre su persona, sus necesidades, sus objetivos y su pobreza,
Dios colocará una barrera entre Él, sus necesidades, objetivos y pobreza en el Día del Juicio".
Entonces Muawiah asignó a un hombre para que cuidara de las necesidades de la gente.
(Abu Daud y Tirmidi)

Malfudat (escritos del Mesías Prometido)

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
1835-1908

RAMADAN

He visto en un sueño que la gente iba en busca de un rejuvenecedor. Uno de ellos se adelantó y, dirigiéndose a mí, dijo: "Este es el hombre que ama al Mensajero de Dios (la paz y bendiciones de Dios sean con él)". Con esto quería decir que la cualidad principal que caracteriza al rejuvenecedor es el amor al Santo Profeta, la paz y bendiciones de Dios sea con él, y, según ellos, yo poseía esta cualidad".

(Rohani Jazain, Vol. 1, pág. 598; Brahine Ahmadía).

El mundo no puede aceptarme, porque yo no pertenezco a este mundo, pero quienes han sido dotados de espiritualidad me aceptan y me aceptarán. Quien me rechaza, rechaza a Aquél que me ha enviado, mas el que a mí se mantiene unido, se une a Aquél al que represento. Llevo una antorcha, que iluminará a los que acuden a mí, pero los que se alejan con sospechas y dudas serán arrojados a las tinieblas. Soy la fortaleza inexpugnable de esta época. Quien se una a mis filas será protegido de los ladrones, bandidos y fieras.

Rohani Jazain, Vol. 3; Fatah Islam (La Victoria del Islam), pág. 34).

El objetivo y las bendiciones del Llalsa Salana

"El propósito principal de esta convención es permitir que cada individuo sincero experimente los beneficios religiosos personalmente, para que pueda incrementar su conocimiento y de esta forma aumenta su percepción de Dios con las bendiciones y beneplácito de Al-lah el Exaltado. Entre los beneficios secundarios también destaca que esta reunión en congregación promueve el intercambio entre todos los hermanos, y fortalece los lazos fraternales dentro de esta Comunidad**."**

Una Convención fuera de lo común

"Es esencial que todos aquellos que puedan permitirse hacer el viaje acudan a esta Convención que simboliza muchos objetivos benditos. Deben restar importancia a los inconvenientes menores por la causa de Al-lah y Su Profeta (la paz de Dios sea sobre él). Al-lah recompensa a las personas sinceras por cada paso que adopten, y ningún trabajo ni sufrimiento realizado por Su causa quedará en el olvido. Vuelvo a enfatizar que no debéis considerar esta Convención como cualquier otra congregación ordinaria. Este fenómeno se basa puramente en la ayuda divina, para la propagación del Islam."

Plegaria

"Concluyo con la plegaria de que todos aquel que viaje para [participar] en esta Convención por la causa de Al-lah: Que Al-lah, el Exaltado, esté con él, Le recompense de manera abundante, tenga piedad de él, le ayude en sus momentos de dificultad y ansiedad y elimine su angustia y desolación. Que le libere de todas las dificultades y le muestre los caminos para [lograr] sus objetivos; que le incluya, en el Día del Juicio, entre aquellos de Sus siervos que son receptores de Sus bendiciones y Su misericordia. Que sea Su Guardian durante su ausencia hasta que su viaje finalice.

¡Oh Al-lah!¡Oh Sublime y Otorgador de recompensas, el Eterno Misericordioso, y Aquel que resuelve todos los problemas: cumple mis plegarias, y haznos victoriosos sobre nuestros oponentes con signos deslumbrantes, porque solo Tú tienes todo el poder y la capacidad.. Amin.

Escritos del Mesías Prometido,
(Ishtihar 7 Dec. 1892,
Majmuah Ishtiharat Vol. I, Páginas 340-342)

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Eid-ul-Azha

Eid-ul-Azha marca el final de la peregrinación de los musulmanes de múltiples naciones del mundo a la Meca en el décimo día del mes islámico Zul Hall. Para terminar la peregrinación con éxito es necesario sacrificar un animal. Como la oración y el ayuno, la realización de la peregrinación es un modo de adoración cuyo propósito es la elevación espiritual, social y económica de los musulmanes.

La peregrinación conlleva que una persona salga de su hogar y, por la causa de Dios, se distancie de amigos y parientes. También sirve como símbolo de respeto por los lugares santos de Dios frecuentados por el Santo Profeta del islam (sa). Al visitar estos lugares sagrados el peregrino experimenta un placer espiritual. El vínculo universal de la hermandad islámica también se fortalece cuando los peregrinos de nacionalidades de todo el mundo se reúnen en un espíritu de unidad y armonía.

El peregrino ofrece el sacrificio de un animal al final de la peregrinación que también se lleva a cabo por los musulmanes de todo el mundo. Esto se hace en memoria de la disposición de Abraham a sacrificar a su hijo Ismael (no a Isaac según se indica en la Biblia) quien, a su vez, aceptó ser sacrificado bajo la creencia de que era la voluntad de Dios. Leemos en el Sagrado Corán:

"Y cuando él (Ismael) fue suficientemente mayor como para trabajar con él (Abraham), le dijo, "Oh mi querido hijo, he visto en un sueño que te ofrezco en sacrificio. Mira pues lo que piensas de ello". Él respondió:" Oh, padre mío, haz lo que se te ordena; me encontrarás, si Al-lah lo quiere, entre los que muestra paciencia".

"Y cuando ambos se sometieron a la voluntad de Dios y se postró en el suelo cabeza abajo. Lo llamamos: "oh Abraham, ciertamente has cumplido el sueño" Así recompensamos en verdad a quienes hacen el bien. (37:103-105)

El Sagrado Corán describe brevemente el significado del sacrificio animal: *"No es su carne la que llega a Al-lah, como tampoco su sangre, sino que es vuestra piedad la que llega a Él."* (22:38)

El acto de sacrificio es simbólico y recuerda a la persona que lo ofrece que tal y como el animal es inferior a él, él también es inferior a Dios y debe, por lo tanto, estar dispuesto a sacrificarse a sí mismo y todos sus intereses e inclinaciones personales por la causa de Dios cuando se le pida que lo haga. El logro de la justicia debe ser la meta de cada musulmán. El Sagrado Corán dice:

"En verdad, el más honorable de entre vosotros, a la vista de Al-lah, es el más justo de vosotros (49:14) quienes de entre ellos hagan el bien y actúen piadosamente tendrán una magnifica recompensa". (3:173)

"En verdad, quien realmente prospera es quien se purifica, y recuerda el nombre de su señor y ofrece oraciones". (87:15-16)

El acto de sacrificio no es en modo alguno una expiación por los pecados de la persona que hace el sacrificio. El islam insiste en que ninguna criatura o persona puede expiar los pecados de nadie y, por lo tanto, rechaza la doctrina cristiana de expiación que declara que Jesús expió los pecados de la humanidad derramando su sangre en la cruz.

Eid-ul-Azha es una ocasión en la que se alienta a los musulmanes de todo el mundo a hacer todo tipo de sacrificios para conseguir la elevación espiritual, moral, social y económica de la humanidad y especialmente de la propia persona. Si lo convierten en una causa común y se esfuerzan por manifestar en sí mismos los atributos de Dios de acuerdo con las enseñanzas y la guía del Sagrado Corán y las enseñanzas del Santo Profeta (sa), entonces, el mensaje de Eid-ul-Azha habrá dado sus frutos.

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